THE BARE FACTS ABOUT THE TORSO TRADE

UNCENSORED

BURLESK: AN AMERICAN PHENOMENON – AND WHY

AUG. 25¢

IS IT SEX or ENTERTAINMENT?

When Burlesk went to College

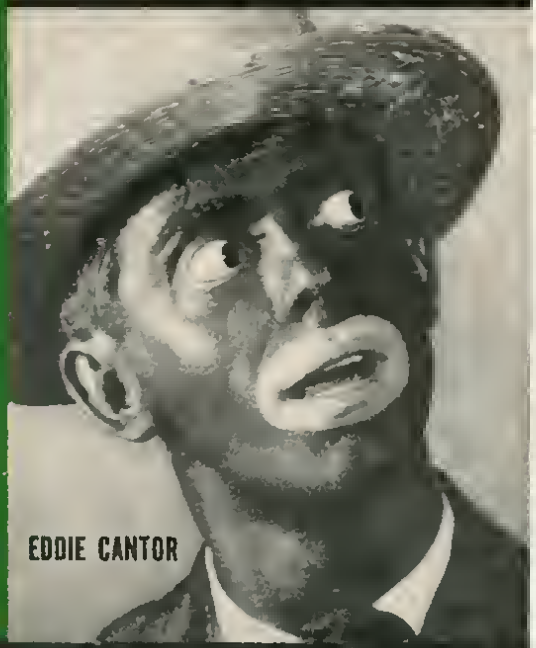
Who puts the "GEE!" in "G"-STRINGS?

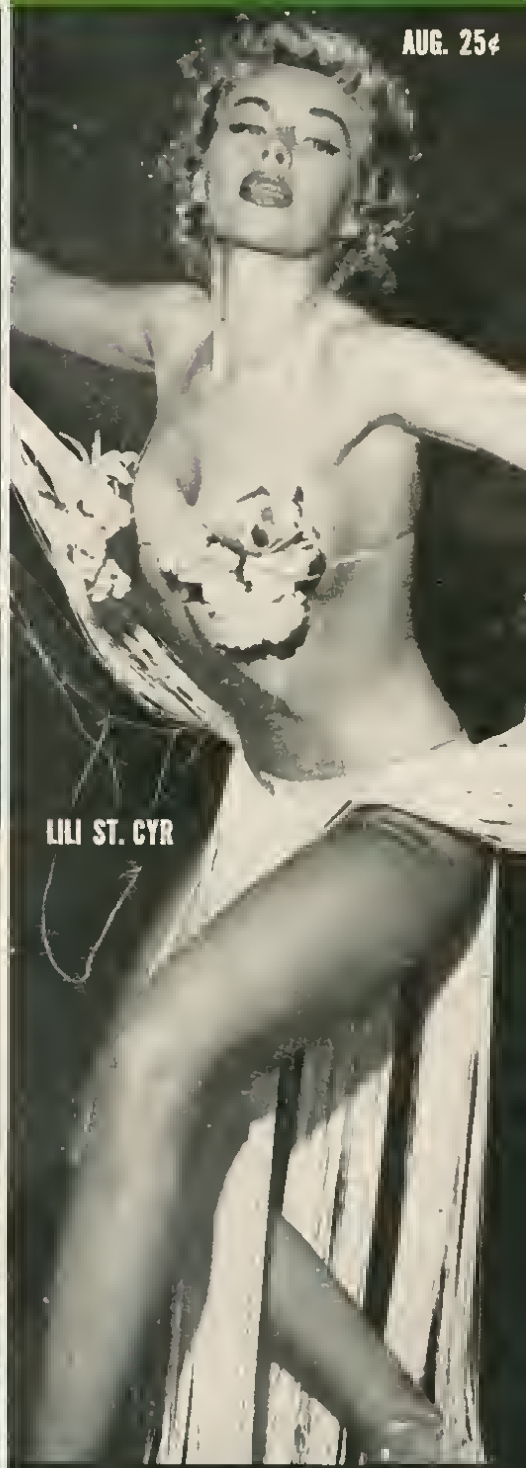
RIOTS OF THE RUNWAY

EXCLUSIVE: WHAT THE CENSORS CENSOR



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RAISING THE CURTAIN

"WHAT is Burlesque?

"Why has it been called 'America's only contribution to the history of the theater?"

How was burlesque able to spawn such great entertainers as Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Abbott and Costello, Jackie Gleason, Red Buttons, Sophie Tucker, Fannie Brice, W. C. Fields and others?

It would take a book to answer all these questions — that is why UNCENSORED is devoting a complete issue to this most fascinating facet of the American theater.

Known variously as Burlesque, Burlesk, Burlycue Burly-Q or just plain Burly, the ingredients that make up a good show consist of a minimum of two comedians, (male), one straight man, a singer —juveniie (male), one "name" exotic dancer (female), two lesser specialty dancers, and a chorus of unabashed ladies, pert, pretty or pulchritudinous.

Essentially, Burlesque has changed little from the old days except for the empbasis. Decades ago the B.M.O.S. (big man of the show) was the top comedian, referred to as the "top banana." He usually was the attraction to the theater. Today, the exotic dancer (another name for strip-teaser) gets the top billing — and she's sometimes referred to as the "top tomato." International beauty Lili St. Cyr, Burlesque's highest paid exotic, earns $5,000 per week and up. Other name dancers across the country earn money in ratio to their ability to draw in customers — with exciting performances.

In the 75-year history of Burlesque as we know it, perhaps the greatest patron of the art was Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. One of his favorite Burlesque bouses was the old Howard Theater in Boston, Mass. That city also being in the vicinity of Harvard University, it was not uncommon to find row after row of the burlesque bouse filled with Harvard students. A troubled professor once asked Justice Holmes about his hookey-playing students, and Holmes gave his now classic reply that "The Harvard curriculum inciudes Howard Theater I, II, III and IV."

The Justice also made no bones about his love for Burlesque. He bad a reserved box seat at the Gaiety Theater in Washington and attended regularly every week.

Whiie it is true that Burlesque is strictly adult entertainment, it bas come in for a lot of hard knocks by biuenoses. Whiie Burlesque makes no bones about the fact that feature attractions at its shows are the girls' feature attractions, legitimate Burlesque is never bawdy. Burlasque's tarnished reputation comes from activities outside of burlycue.

After tbe war a number of smaii bars that wanted to expand business, placed smaii stages on the premises. Adding a spotlight and an uninhibited girl who was ready to take off ber clotbes, a crude form of stripping became popular. The giri or girls after the sbow acted as waitresses. This still goes on in Chicago, Baltimore, Miami etc., and is a new version of the B-Girl (or bar girl) who earns a living from getting percentages of the drinks sbe sells. But tbis is not Burlesque — it's a tragedy — or a comedy, whicbever way you look at it.

In the 30's at Harvard, a Professor Roback informed bis psychology class that witnessing a strip-tease was important if one were to be "truly cultured."

Tbougb Burlesque has been tagged "An Irish stew of entertainment" officiai historian of Burlesque, Bernard Sobel whose book "Burlycue" is an authority in the field, said, "Every man and woman in the United States should see a Burlesque sbow. Most towns should bave one running regularly . . . It has been an important influence in establisbing a wbolesome attitude towards sex because it acknowledges bonestly the beauty of tbe buman figure and exploits frankly tbe humor inherent in the relation of tbe male and the female."

On occasion, TV, Broadway and Hollywood bave seen fit to sneer at Burlesque — the original vaudaville from which all tbese mediums bave spawned. But these self-same mediums never hesitate to use the ancient Burlesque skits, and its great comedians iike Bert Lahr or Jackie Gleason.

Few people realize that three of Hollywood's most famous leading ladies are graduates of Burlesque circuits. Barbara Stanwyck and Joan Crawford started their showbiz careers in the Burlesque chorus as dancers. Ginger Rogers was a soubrette (the lead dancer) at the Haymarket Theater in Chicago.

Today, Burlesque employs over 5,500 women and about 1,500 men across the nation. Where only 20 Burlesque tbeaters exist today (N.Y. once had 14 aione), hundreds of niteclubs feature Burlesque stage shows, while many Burlesque road companies play one night stands bringing live entertainment to the hinterland audiences. Burlesque, pegged as an "American Folk Art" remains popular, feeding ever-new young faces and forms to the public while repeating the same old jokes ("They've been laughing at these jokes for 60 years; why stop telling them now?"). Burlesque still remains the uproarish, uninhibited "poor man's" musical comedy.

In the following pages you will find enougb facts about figures in this art to make you an expert!

— HY STEIMAN



UNCENSORED

BEHIND-THE-SCENES-LOWDOWN ON THE TORSO TRADE











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How it all Began!

They said Adah was no lady when she showed on stage in flesh-colored tights back in '61. But that's how burley was born!



A 1910 playbill for the Murray Hill Theatre, which featured Billy Watson, Happyland girls.

When Ziegfeld saw the can-can in France he envisioned what became the glorified Follies.

THE word Burlesque has a long, honorable and sometimes humorous history. The word itself first cropped up in a comic opera called *Opere Burlesche* in Rome just around the time Columbus "took-off" for America. The word caught on rapidly and all Europe was sooo laughing at *Burlesques* — which were satires or "take-offs" on the heavy, classical plays.

However, when old King Louie XIV saw a *Burlesquer* split the seat of his trousers in a sketch, the king weot into a laughing coma and it took two royal physiciaos an hour to hriog him to. From then on slapstick became an integral part of Burlesque.

Lampooos contioued their merry way for decades until they ran into two major obstacles which were to change the course of Burlesque history. The first was a woman, the second was American ingeouity. Io 1861, Adah Isaacs Menkeo, a huxom heauty with long hrunette locks, starred in a play as Mazeppa. The show's only outstanding feature was Adah's entrance oo stage, strapped to a hig, hlack horse. BUT the lady was adorned in skin-colored tights. While the nation gasped at this seemiogly "nude" woman, critics applauded the show as a spectacle.

Actor Leooard Grover gave Burlesque its big push over the threshold of the American stage. Together with two of his friends he presented oo the N.Y. stage a musical variety show called "The Black Crook." It consisted of lampoons, skits, funny songs and risque situations. The year was 1866. When word got around that curvy women in tights could be seen in the "Crook," the ticket line stretched for hlocks. The show lasted four and a half years and ticket sales jumped to nearly $750,000, an unheard-of figure in those days.

By 1868, two years after the "Crook" had opened, an English heauty by the name of Lydia Thompson invaded New York with her "British Blondes" in an epic called "Ixion." Clad in tights which looked like grandad's red flannels, the English girls pranced arouod singing, dancing and "exposing" themselves to eager patrons.

Burlesque as we know it today,



Handsome Harry Miner personally picked girls and acts for his Bowery theatre.



Typical of burlesque at the turn of the century is this trio of the beef trest.

Dance by "Little Egypt" in '93 Fair paved way for all exotics.

But what Little Egypt had, Samia Gamal, below, of Egypt, has more.

however, was pioneered by M. B. Leavift with "Madame Rentz's Female Minstrels." It played to SRO three years, pink tights, risque songs and all, and since Leavitt plugged its "decency" in his ads, going to his show was considered fashionable.

From here on in Burlesque moved fast. An associate of Leavitt's, Sam T. Jack, left the "Minstrels" to go on his own. The first act he signed up was a little Syrian lady called Fahreda Mahazar. It was 1893, the year of the Chicago World's Fair, and the educational part of the exhibition suddenly exploded with atomic force when Fahreda, billed as "Little Egypt," did a gyration known as the belly dance. Industrial achievement flew out the window and people flocked to her door. Jack made enough money to open up his own Burlesque house in Chicago in the '90's.

Of course, in the usual American tradition, you can't have enough of a good thing. Billy Watson's "Beef Trust" featured burlesque queens, none weighing less than 150 pounds. Hefty May Howard was named the "Burlesque Queen" — and she admitted to weighing 180. Then came slender Mabel Santley who weighed around

Famous Follies beauties of '19 were Jes Reed, 1, Dorothy Kiemer in frills of day.



125., and was really the first of the burly Queens with an hour-glass figure—that admirers watched by the hour.

By the turn of the century bootchy-cootchy dancers like Little Egypt and her imitators Zaza (not Gabor), Fatima and Mlle. de Leon were the rage. By now the tights were disappearing and bare midriffs, black silk stockings and whalebone bras were making their appearance.

Florenz Ziegfeld came on the scene with musical comedies in 1901 which included youthful American beauties. Curves and wasp waists became the vogue. In 1906 Ziegfeld first set eyes on the "Folies Bergere" in Paris. Not to be outdone, he created the Ziegfeld Follies featuring "Long-stemmed American Beauties." (This trademark, after Ziegfeld's death, became the label for pint-sized showman Billy Rose.) As Ziegfeld undraped the ladies of the chorus over the years, the fabulous Shubert brothers introduced bare legs and bare midriffs in a musical entitled "The Passing Show of 1914."

The very next year the Minsky Brothers entered Burlesque and opened up a whole new era.



Famous beauty of day, Eva Tanguay could get wolf whistles by appearing in tights.

Comic Harry Watson donned boxing gloves, crossed eyes to get howls of yesteryear.



Martha Mansfield, 1, and Dorothy Leeds also dressed up Ziegfeld's '19 Follies.

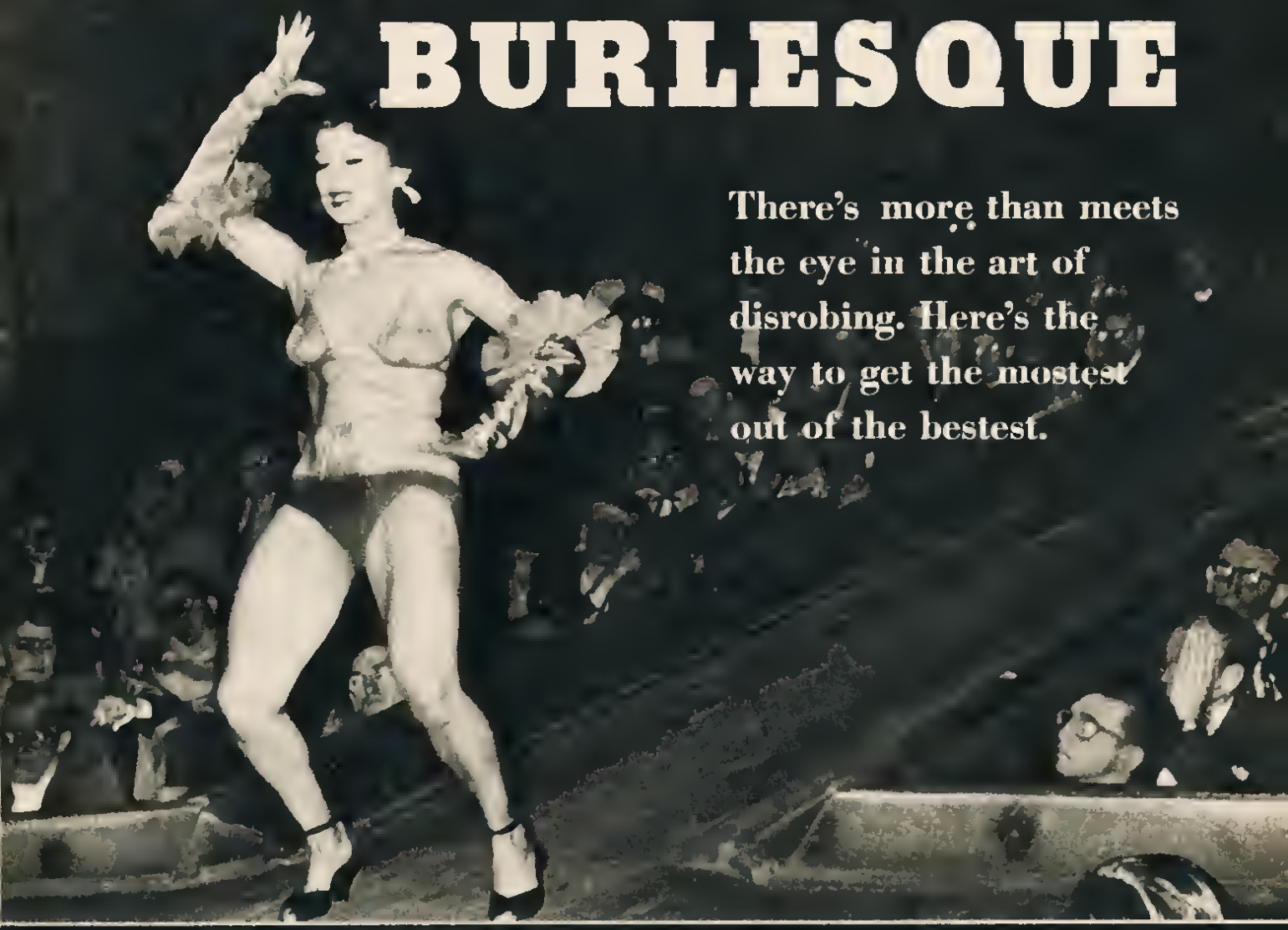


Step by step this dance by Boston's sultry blonde Sylvia McKay provides the burlesque fan with perfect demonstration of how great exotic dancers can divest themselves of their garments with ease of motion and little less of grace. Sylvia is the tops in terpsichore.



HOW TO WATCH BURLESQUE

There's more than meets the eye in the art of disrobing. Here's the way to get the mostest out of the bestest.



There's good reason why Chile Pepper is billed as the "Cuban Fire Ball." Her "smoking" bump technique is the smoothest in burlesk.

TO a man or woman who has never visited a Burlesk theater, the first question asked is, "Is there a right way and a wrong way to watch Burlesk?" According to most experts, the answer is "No." One impresario remarked, "All you have to do is keep your eyes open."

The comic sketches need little explaoation, for they are based on hroad humor — never wit. (Difference, as one comedian explained it, is that wit is the rapid fire gag used hy comedian Boh Hope; humor is more visual aod requires paotomime a la Chaplin or Chester Conklin, and oftentimes makes use of ludicrous props.) The slapstick comedy was usurped from Burlesque hy the movies for the Keystone Cop comedies and have beeo used all the way up to Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. Jerry Lewis' dad, incidentally, is an old-time vaudevillian who got his start io Burlesque. The jokes themselves in Burly are ambiguous, occasiooally "blue" hut not more so thao the audience would hear at a bigh-class oightclub, a Broadway musical or play. Most of the comedy is of the situation variety and needs little explanation.

The Novelty act, the Stripper, or the Exotic requires a little more attention — and ohviously gets it. Of the three, it's the stripteuse who comes in for required explanatioo.

The stripteuse enters the stage fully clothed and spends up to 10 minutes removiog her garmeots. Ooe dancer, Trudine, the recent featured attraction at the Carmen Theater in Philadelphia, eoters the stage wearing a 20-lb. beaded gown. Lili St. Cyr, in some of her numbers, enters the spotlight io a Dior dress from Paris. Costumes range io price anywhere from $150 to $2,500 depeoding upon the per-

former. Tricky snaps and zippers on all garments make disrobing easy for the performer.

Interesting sidelight on disrobing is the fact that the headline stripteuse pays a "catcher" to collect garments as they are shed. Catcher is usually a member of the chorus who gets from $5 a week and up depending upon the "name" of the dancer. How far the stripper strips depends upon the locality.

Two basic strip motions are the "Bump" and the "Grind." Bump consists of a sharp hip movement where the lower section of the body is thrust forward or "bumped" provocatively. Grind consists of a gyration of the hips, clockwise or anti-clockwise and is slightly faster than the hula-hula hip movement. It ends up with a bump.

A popular tune not many years ago narrated the goings on — or is it the "comings off" — of a stripper. Song revealed the action at the Burlesk theater where the gang used to go — and they'd shout "Take-it-off, take-it-off," and the dancer did — but she'd "Always be a lady — and stop just in time."

Photos on these pages reveal the step-by-step procedure of a dancer in action. She's blonde, glamorous Sylvia McKay. When a national magazine asked, "Who is Sylvia," The exciting young damsel replied, "That's the verse of a song, written by William Shakespeare — and I'm the girl who put the shake into Shakespeare."

She first appears on stage nattily — and naughtily — attired in a large hat, high heels, a checkered blouse, an Apache skirt etc. She discards these immediately and remains spot-lighted in a fancy G-String, a veil-skirt plus bra.

As the music plays softly in the background, she dances teasingly around the stage and takes a full minute to discard the transparent skirt. The more graceful the act of disrobing, the greater the performer — and Sylvia is tops. Sometimes, however, she'll remove her bras before, and sometimes after, she has removed the skirt. Don't panic. This is only one of her bras, for she wears another beneath the "prop" bra. In bra and G-String she dances, bumps and grinds and gyrates around the stage. Occasionally she wears a tassel belt over her G-String — which is removable (depending on the bluenoses) and even her bra may come off, leaving her with the bare essentials — G-String and "pasties" — the latter being large discs which cover the essential parts of the bosom.

Like in every profession, there are some performers who go beyond the limits of the law — mistaking vulgarity for talent. This type of performer has done more to discredit Burlesk than all the censors in America. This is the kind of performer who works the fly-by-night bars and grilles — never in a reputable Burlesk house or nightclub. Quite often such a performer will do an obscene act without the permission of her employer — and then all Burlesk gets in trouble.

Lois de Fee, the 6' 4" stripteuse had this to say about strippers who didn't know when to stop. "Those girls should be suspended and treated like crooked jockeys. You don't close a racetrack if a jockey throws a race, so why close a theater if a stripper strips too much? Why not suspend the stripper?"

The exact difference about what is or is not acceptable has never quite been made clear. What is acceptable in one state is banned in another. Philadelphia's branch of AGVA (theatrical union) screens the strip dances before a performer plays that city. As Herman Comroe, president of the Cafe Men's Assoc. of greater Philadelphia explained, it's often no fault of the club owner if a dancer gets carried away by her gyrations.

So what you see at Burlesk depends on where you are.

A former ballet dancer, Ginger DuVal is highly successful exponent of the grind.



Stunning Susan waits in wings to be the "catcher" for another performer on stage.



THOSE MARVELOUS MINSKYS

They brought burley to Broadway and Red Buttons, Billy Daniels and Dan Dailey, Jr., to stardom.



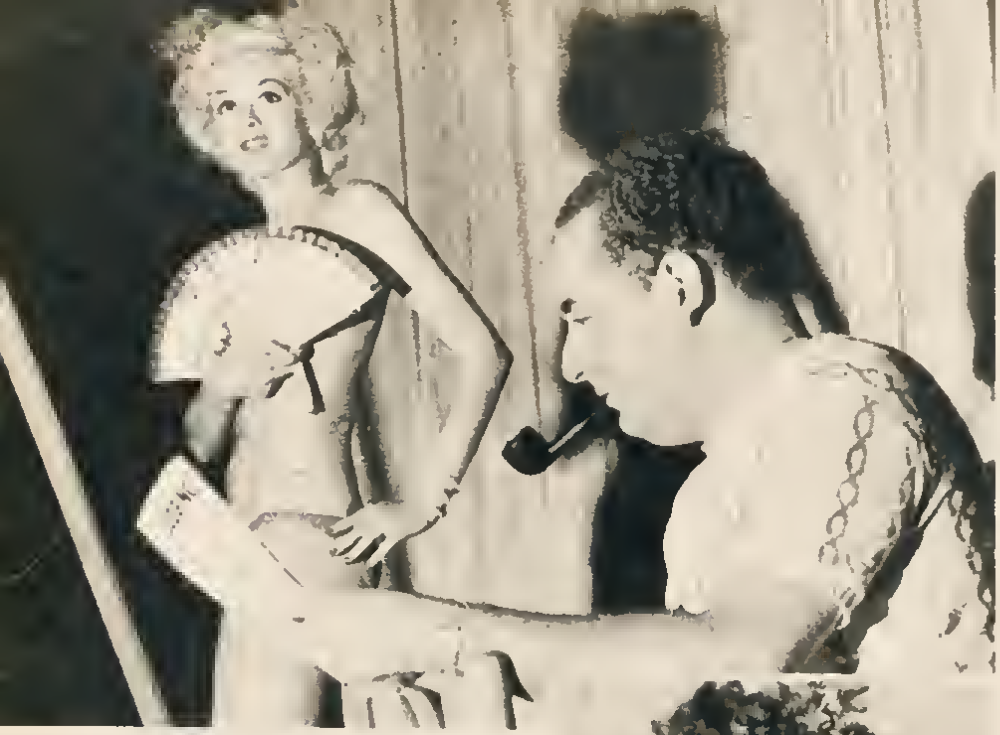
All the headline strippers of burlesque appeared at this famous Minsky House.

Minsky-sponsored Margie Hart is hailed as one of Burlesque's all-time greats.



Red Buttons is one of many TV and movie comics acclaiming Minsky aid to stardom





Dordy Orlondo with her producer, Horold Minsky. She morried him, quit burlesque.

Sherry Brittan's explosive tolents become onother Minsky burlesque bombshell.





Ann Corio brought down many a house. Most of them have belanged to Minsky.

Another famous product of Minskys: She's the sensotionol Georgio Sothern.



ONE DAY in the late '30's, Harold Minsky dropped into Leon & Eddie's nightclub on 52nd St. While talking to his friend Leon, he noticed the tall, stately, 6' 4" beauty walking around the club. He had seen her around the club before acting as a "bouncer" of sorts, but actually being an attraction, for she wore slacks and a tight sweater, the back of which read "Leon & Eddie's." Actually this was the first time he had noticed that for an exceptionally tall girl, she moved with poise and grace. He called her over.

"Lois," said Harold, "How much do you earn here?"

"$75 a week," she said.

"How'd you like to earn twice that much?"

"Yeah," answered Lois skeptically, "What do I have to do?"

"Become an exotic dancer."

Lois accepted, but confessed, "I've never danced before."

Harold explained the ropes to her, had some of his leading exotics teach her a few numbers and she went on billed as "The Amazon." Nervous and shaking throughout her initial appearance on stage, she received a tremendous ovation. Thus did another exotic dancer join Burlesque. Lois, of course, is Lois de Fee who is still a big attraction anywhere.

People are amazed to discover that Harold Minsky, the greatest impressario in Burlesque today, is only 39 years old. This handsome, professional-looking gent who wears tweeds and smokes a pipe, is actually the illustrious son of an illustrious father. A. B. Minsky, Harold's father, started the Minsky Burlesque dynasty back in 1912 at the National Winter Garden on Second Avenue in New York City. The theater was on the 6th floor, and patrons ("And slummers at that time," says Harold) jammed the two elevators that brought them to the theater to see the spectacles produced by quiet, shy A. B. Minsky.

Years later Billy Herbert and Morton Minsky, brothers of A. B., joined the enterprise. When the brothers split up years later, they formed a friendly rivalry operating half a dozen Burlesque houses in New York. Fiercely independent, the Minskys never joined the Columbia Wheel operated by Sam Scribner, or the Mutual Wheel operated by I. Herk, or the Hirst Circuit. The Minskys became famous for putting on "stock" shows, that is, they bought whatever talent they liked instead of being part of a "wheel" where a stock package

(*Continued on page* 67)



Lilly's first Broadway success was in "Burlesque," a musical starring Bert Lahr.



Columnist Earl Wilson uses "eyes in back of his head" to interview the Cat Girl.

THE SECRET OF MY DANCE OF LOVE

by LILLY CHRISTINE

A sizzling, streamlined version of Salome's famous dance is taking audiences by storm. Now, for the first time, its originator tells what makes the "Dance of Love" click.

(Editor's note:—Miss Christine is a young, golden-skinned girl who rocketed to stardom in a Broadway musical entitled "Peep Show." Her sensational "cat dance" literally stole the show — even though it was studded with the most beautiful and the most undraped females in showbiz.

Her original burlycue name was "Cholly" but she reverted to her own name during the casting of the show. Not averse to public speaking or publicity, Miss Christine has lectured on the dance at the University of Oklahoma and the College of the City of New York. The latter lecture, held in a classroom that normally holds 150 students, was splitting at the seams when 700 students (of dancing?) crammed the room. The N.Y. Daily News photographer could scarcely get into the classroom to take pictures of the great event. Lilly has been a starlet in movies, appearing in such favorites as "My Wild Irish Rose," and "Two Guys From Texas." Her first break came in another Broadway musical cal-

Lilly conveys the lithe grace of a cat.

Each movement of the 5'6" blonde body ripples with art.



led "Burlesque" which starred a graduate of old time Burlycue, Bert Lahr. Tulsa University once built an ice statue of Lilly. Her portrait is on exhibition along with all the great legitimate theatre stars in the N.Y. Public Library collection.

Fabulous Lilly was also awarded New Orleans' first "Blue Book Award of Merit" for being the best exotic dancer of the 1951-52 *season. How does she account for her success? Let Lilly tell you.*

I've danced in most major cities in the country. Once I even lectured at the City College of New York as a guest of Prof. Van Veen, but this is my first literary venture figuratively speaking. I want to reveal the big secret about my dances. Loving cats ever since I was knee high to them, I imitated and interpreted their every movement, and they became an important part of my life. Later, in dancing, I seriously attempted to copy their fluid motions and muscular control.

All my repertory is my own choreography based on years of practice in ballet and modern dancing. My latest opus is called the "Pillow of Love," an exotic tale of ecstasy, which I currently did at Prima's 500 Club in New Orleans.

It's about a girl who sings for her lover who is fighting in a far-off land. I start my act singing a song entitled, "I dream of you as I lay my head upon my pillow." Then I begin my dance.

Just as painters express themselves on canvas, and writers on paper — I express myself in dancing. But there is one big difference. While dancing is an art, too, it's the art of movement of your own body to portray an emotion. Since nature seems to have blessed me with a body that evidently meets all the visual requirements, my dance is devoted, naturally, to the appeal of the feminine architecture. And why not? People should take advantage of their assets, whether they're physical or mental.

But the real secret is that I make love to my audience. I really do. It's this way. I visualize my audience as one composite person whom I'm in love with.

Somebody said it all when he said, "She sends me." The situation between me and my audience is like a broadcasting station and your radio set. What the transmitter doesn't send, the receiver doesn't get.

Love,
Lilly Christine.



Her face is a byword in burlesk. She's also played in many movies.

The notion's best pin-up photogs consider Lilly their "greatest."

Eddie Cantor started climb to the big time in blackface. Here, "Whoopee."





Another great who made big bounce to TV fame from burlesque, Red Buttons.

Phil Silvers, star of Top Banana and vet of 100 films was in burly in 1936.



FROM SLAPSTICK TO STARDOM



Technique Bert Lahr learned in burley brought him fame in Broadway revues

A man with a voice that will never be forgotten, Al Jolson started in burly.





As a kid Red Skelton watched burly from backstage, learned gags that led to fame.

They called 'em "low comics" back in those break-in days of burlesque. But the pie they took in the eye put their names in the sky!

COMIC: My wife has a lot of faults, hut me — I've only got two.

Straightman: What are tbey?

Comic: Everything that I do, and everything that I say.

This type of quick gag sounded "new" on TV recently. But it was also "new" when radio was a pup, wben headliners played the Palace in New York, and was "new" in Burly in 1900. If anyone really cares, that joke was prohahly cracked by Socrates about his nagging wife. As one well-known comedian put it, "It's not what you do hut the way that you do it that counts." He was referring to comedians, with each headliner having his own method of delivery.

Chief contrihutor to the comedy of today is the Burlesk of yesterday. As one impressario puts it, "I was watching Red Buttons on TV the other day. He did a funny skit that had the audience in stitches, but helieve me, that skit has heen a 'standard' in Burlesk for over 50 years." Red Buttons is the first to admit that many of his funniest sketches come from Burly. Reason? He's a graduate of the Burlesk houses, and he's the comic who made the famous crack that graduating from Minsky's was like graduating from Harvard.

This, of course, holds true for most of our top ranking comedians in showhiz today. The slapstick circuit has given more hig names to Broadway, Hollywood, radio, TV and the Theater than any single phase of showhusiness. Red Buttons is the most recent and perhaps one of the more successful men to hreak into the hig time.

Around the year 1906, "The New York Stars Burlesque Co." was slated to make a Philadelphia appearance. The King of the cowboys at that time was Buffalo Bill, hut the greatest cowboy philosopher and bumorist was a gent hy the name of Will Rogers. Yep, you guessed it, Will was the star of the Burly company and Philadelpbia, like many other hig cities where he appeared with tbe Burlesque troupe, sold out way in advance. He twirled bis rope, rode a horse, quipped humorously about topics of the day and even danced (not very well) and the Burlesque audiences ate it up. This is the same Rogers who later starred on Broadway in the Ziegfeld Follies, and whose advice was sought by Kings, ambassadors and even the late President Roosevelt. Until his untimely plane crash in Alaska when he and Wiley Post were killed, Rogers was prohahly the most beloved American in the world.

In 1909, a slight, banjo-eyed young hoy entered an amateur (Burlycue invented amateur nights incidentally) and the 16-year old walked off with $5, the first-prize money. From then on it was no stopping Eddie Cantor from getting into showbusiness. He hecame a singing waiter at the Long Island cafes and beer parlors, oftentimes at the same histros that Jimmy

Recognize the beefy boy in middle? It's Fatty Arbuckle with his burlesque company.







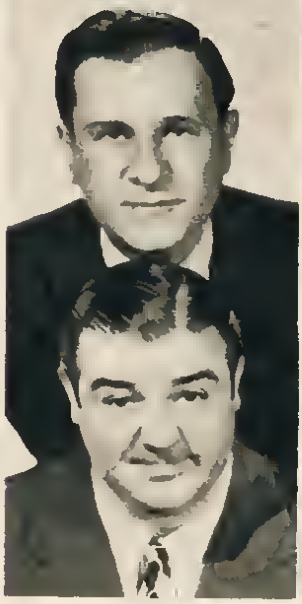
Rare shot of Fannie Brice appearing at Amateur Nite.



Sid Stone, right, TV pitchman, was a burlesque comic.



A face and an act that made millions laugh. W. C. Fields was never imitated.



Abbott and Costello soared to fame from burly routine.



Kicking the laughs around are Margie Hart, all-time burley great and Jimmy Save, one of finest comics of Wheel days.

"Schnozzola" Durante was playing as a singing waiter. Eddie went on to Burlesque with a partner as a song and dance man. Later, as a solo, he did hit parts in musical comedy and by 1914, at the tender age of 21, he was a "name" as a member of Gus Edwards' "School Daze." By 1920, Cantor's name was tops on Broadway as a musical comedy star and minstrel man.

He went on to star on radio, and is now star of his own show, "Colgate Comedy Hour." He's 61 today and has several dozen movies such as ("Whoopee") and musicals to his stellar credit.

Another product of New York's East side is Bert Lahr. Now starring in the filmusical "Rose Marie" Bert is a product of Burly and started out in "The Best Show in Town" a roadshow Burlesque that was part of the Columbia Wheel. Like Cantor he was part of "School Daze." Then Lahr went on to join Jack Pearl, a Burly comedian who was a top dialectician comic. One day Pearl became ill and Bert Lahr took over and was a smash. He went on, or as Lahr says, "I was drafted from Burlesque to play on Broadway in 'Delmar's Revels.' While movies, stage and TV claim him for their own, Bert says, "I still credit everything to my training in Burlesque."

When Lahr appeared in the Broadway musical "Burlesque" a young soubrette appeared with him. Her name was Ruby Stevens. Hollywood scouts came to pick up Bert for the movies, but not Ruby who they thought didn't have much talent. P. S. Ruby later changed her name to Barbara Stanwyck.

Other great women performers who got their breaks in Burlesque were Fannie Brice ("Baby Snooks") who later wed Billy Rose and helped him achieve great theater success, Sophie Tucker who worked Hill's Burlesque Wheel singing "That Lovin' Rag," and Ethel Shutta.

Milton Berle, who never played Burlesque, is nevertheless one if its most brilliant students. Many of his standard routines are straight from the files of the old Burly Knapsack. Sid Stone, however, until recently Berle's "pitchman," is a product of the Burly circuits.

D'ja ever laugh at the antics of W. C. Fields? He started out as a juggler (self taught) after running away from home. The only juggler ever to play on the same bill with Sarah Bernhardt, he developed a

(*Continued on page* 67)

Jackie Gleason moved from Hoboken to Newark to start career in burly house.





If you've got $12,000 to spare you, too, can produce a burlesque show—for a week!

The High Cost of Taking it Off

BEHIND all the glitter and the girls that make up Burlesque, is the business end of the Theater. Gone are the nostalgic days when girls got $15 a week at the turn of the century — and were usually docked up to $5 for minor infractions of the rules like turoing up late for rehearsals, cussing etc. Of course, the majority never even received their "supposed" $15, and the producer was looked upoo hy the company as the moustached villain in a mellodrama. As often as oot the theater man paid what he could and had business usually saw compaoy members fined for mioor infractions. So there was less salary to pay.

But those were the good old "daze" of Burlesque. Today's unions, AGVA and the B.A.A. (Burlesque Artists Association) have minimum requiremeots of $55 a week for chorus girls and $125 minimum for an exotic. Most theaters are obliged to pay above the scale to get good performers.

Io 1935, Fortune magazine puhlished a lengthy article entitled, "The Burlesque Business, A.D. 1935." Even in this short space of time costs of producing a show skyrocketed enormously. These high costs are one of the reasons Burlesque Theaters have suffered, and the circuits have been forced to put on a 2½ hour show using only seven to eight performers. This brings the caliher of performances down, and brings in less customers and makes the Wheel a dipping cycle. Meanwhile independents like Minsky who gamhle hy puttiog on a large, star-studded show for the audiences, though the costs are higher, draw the crowds.

The total cost of putting on a complete full-scale Burlesque show in 1935 was $2,541. Today a similar show at Minsky's costs approximately $12,000.

INFLATION

1935

26 chorus girls at $21 ea.	$546
Team of 2 comics at $75 ea.	150
1 straightmao	50
1 male singer or juvenile	35
Prima dona or dance team	50
Headliner exotic	125
No. 2 specialty dancer	75
No. 3 " "	40
Costumes (per week)	150
5 stagehands at $75 ea.	375
Scenery	100
5 musicians (union men at $60 per week, plus $20 extra for the handleader)	320
Front of house (ushers, hox office, bouncer and advertising)	400
Producer's salary	125

1954

16 chorus girls at $75 (6 day week)	$700
2 comics at $250 ea.	500
1 straightman	175
1 singer or juvenile	150
1 dancer	250
1 stripteuse $350 to	4,000
No. 2 "	250
No. 3 "	150
Costumes (per week) (Roadshow costumes up to $25,000)	500
7 stagehands	1,000
Scenery (some house-huilt)	450
9 musicians	1,790
Front of house (this does not include advertising or a houncer)	500
Advertising	1,000
1 feature film and booth Rent, insurance, lights, heat, air conditioning	1,200
Management, office girls etc.	300
Producer gets what's left	???

Saturday is the hig night for Burlesque. Seems that everyhody or anybody who wants to see a current show arrives at the theater at g:30 pm oo Saturday night. The line forms outside the marquee, and folks wait up to two hours to get in. Of course, the night hefore or the night after, there'd be no waiting at all. As the programs change weekly, (even if a performer or comedians are held over,) so do the costumes and scenery change.

Most Burlesque performers who are "names" and a large number who are just plain average manage to make a nice living from the medium. One man and wife team have managed to put their son through private schools, some have large homes, most of them drive around in nice cars and all, without exception, are happy in Burlesque — perhaps a lot happier than those who come to see them and whose earnings are daily affected by the high cost of living. Maybe that's why patrons pay from $1.00 to $1.50 for the enjoyment of seeing happy people entertain them.





Billed "World's Most Beautiful Woman," Lili St. Cyr opened for what was to be a long run at Hollywood's famous Ciro's. It was raided by Sheriff's office. Brought to court, Lili was exonerated by Judge. Below are scenes from her famous routine.

WHAT THE

CENSORS CENSOR

What Newark terms not naughty, Boston may ban. So if you've wondered whether censorship makes sense, read this and see.



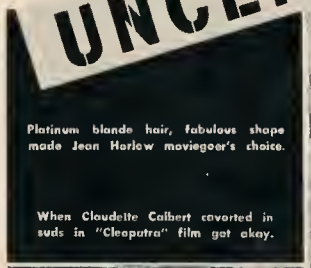
Attorney Jerry Giesler, left, defended Lili's act successfully in L.A. court.

CENSORSHIP is the catch-net under the tightrope of art. Let any artist or artiste slip off the tightrope, and he or she would be securely caught — in the censorship net.

Movies, Burlesque's greatest competitor in S.A. (sex appeal), have been under more restrictions than any other form of entertainment. Said one Chicago Burlesque house manager, "It's only because the movies are shown to the whole family, children as well as adults. That way they come up against the censors. Burlesque, on the other hand, is strictly entertainment for adults. We know that we are under constant surveillance to see that we don't go overboard — and we're always playing it on the safe side."

When Burlesque in general or a theater in particular comes under censure, the chances are it's done during the period of a political election. On rare occasions, the devil-may-care attitude of a particular stripteuse may cause a ban on a particular theater. One of the most venerable theaters in the country was closed down in December, 1953 because of such a case. It was Boston's Old Howard, the century-old theater which once had Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes as a regular patron.

Burlesque in Boston had for several years been "hot." Without the usual large choruses, scenery and other fine trappings the Howard featured mainly strippers. Naturally, to please the clientele, each girl performed "strong." As in any other field of show business, strippers are also "bams," and each began trying to outdo each other. It got to the point where the dances became downright naughty. The girls began "flashing" (exposing bosom and much more.) Caught in this sad web were two well-known exotic dancers, Rose La Rose and Irma the Body. While the girls are both talented and top professionals in the field, they admitted going "too far" at one particular performance. Result? The Old Howard was closed, and Burlesque banned from Boston. By February, 1954, the Old Howard opened



Platinum blonde hair, fabulous shape made Jean Harlow moviegoer's choice.

When Claudette Colbert cavorted in suds in "Cleopatra" film got okay.







Bostoo's Moyor Joho B. Hyoos frowoed oo burlesque, okoyed sbuttering of Howard.



Late Moyor LoGuordio was famous for his crusades, honned burlesque in 1937.

Nearly 30 years ogo ploybov Moyor Wolker urged curfew on these girlie shows.



again as a vaudeville house, and it is expected that it will again bring back Burlesque when the hubbub dies down.

However, this case is a rare one on the censor's side of the ledger. It is common knowledge in Miami that whenever an official runs for election, there's usually a raid on the Jungle Club and the Red Barn, two niteclub-burlesque clubs. Neither one has yet to be fined or even found guilty of presenting "wicked" shows—but come election time, there are the raids. Of course, the raid usually results in mountains of local publicity—and after all, that's what counts during a political battle.

The censors, as far back as the first day of Burlesque began, travelled around with a telescope in one hand and a home-made book of rules and regulations of what is and isn't proper, in the other. The "British Belles" and the "Yankee Doodle Girls" of the 19th Century aroused angry voices — even though the buxom beauties on stage wore longjohns — or the equivalent.

The Can-Can was exported from France, and that country has been trying to get it back ever since. In 1910, one Samuel Paynter Wilson was shocked by burlesque performers who kicked up their heels. (The girls wearing dresses at the time) — "and the higher they kicked, the higher their salary," he reported, but that was 1910.

Today, a beautiful girl in a Bikini would get an admiring glance, but never an admonishment — on the beach. Yet it is a known fact the Burlesqueens wear as much, if not more, while performing on stage. But it's all a matter of perspective. Any male visiting any art museum may watch curvaceous nudes, wearing nothing

President Colvin Coolidge, known for his modesty and moderation, never announced any opinion pro or con on burlesque. But Chief Justice Holmes openly went to shows.



more than smiles, and he is content — along with the critics who call it art. Venus de Milo stands unabashed wearing nothing more artistic than a sarong, sad only perhaps because she lost her arms. Marilyn Monroe calendars have been sold by the thousands and been published in many magazines. Though the beauteous blonde wears nothing, in technicolor yet. But believe it or not, every single Burlesque dancer would be frightened to death to ape any of this "art."

The object of stripteuses, however, is not to appear nude on stage. It is a well-known fact that while men pay little attention to a girl on the beach wearing a Bikini — just watch all the male eyes on a bus, subway or streetcar when a girl lifts her skirt to fix her stocking.

Luscious Lilly Lamont, the voluptuous stripteuse from Alaska, who is presently appearing at Ernie's in Greenwich Village, N.Y. remarked that Burlesque is one-tenth visual and nine-tenths mental. She gave this as an example. "Ten of the world's greatest art critics visited the Louvre to discuss the world's greatest nudes. It was late at night and all the men were concentrating on the paintings in silence. Suddenly the quiet was broken by the rustling of a woman's skirt. To a man they all turned — to look down at the charwoman — an elderly lady of 65, washing the floors."

"Censorship is a yardstick," argue its watchdogs, but how accurate a yardstick is it? Who is to say that an extra inch of G-String makes a stripper's dance less objectiooable. Less objectionable than what? Less objectionable than a pantie girdle ad on a streetcar poster?

Ziegfeld saw the Folies Bergere



in Paris, and brought girlie shows to the stage of America. The Shuberts added "bare legs and bare tummies" to the theater. These men presented burlesque with a veneer — a gloss that was acceptable to the carriage trade, for the prices of the tickets were four times that of the run-of-the-mill Burly houses. Ziegfeld was never raided, banned, damned or closed and neither were the Shuberts.

Up until the 20's the movies were more daring with their disrobing than Burlesque was. Just after World War I a pretty girl with blonde curly hair, was in fact called "Curls" Casey, had only to appear on stage, impishly wiggle enough so that her skirt flew above her stockings exposing a few inches of bare skin, and the audience swooned, applauded, shrieked and bought tickets for more performances. The movies, meanwhile, had Theda Bara who, with little more than a loin cloth and a brief bra, cavorted through dozens of films. Tarzan's mate in the movies wore even less. By the time the 30's rolled around, Claudette Colbert was taking nude baths in milk and Jean Harlow practically revealed all in "Hell's Angels."

The Burlesque strip actually started in 1928. A young dancer who came out on stage to strut her stuff actually was embarrassed to discover that her bra strap had broken and all the whoops and yells from the male audience were not applause for her dancing ability — but for her charms.

Wise young thing that she was, she "fixed" her strap so that it would "accidentally" break just as she started to perform. Censors clamped down on the theater manager, but as the girl told the officials, "I can't help it if I bust out of my clothes."

(*Continued on page* 70)

Raided? Nope, it's Georgia Sothern, served summons after hassle with lawyer.



Stripper Rose La Rose claims a 63-bumps-per-minute record. Was banned in Boston.

"Flash" contest between Irma, below, and Rose La Rose incited Boston censor's ire.



Part 1

Tops in torso tossing,
these famous quiver gals
have won their niche in
burley's Hall of Frame.

RIOTS OF THE RUN-WAY

A "strong" worker before audience, red-haired Winnie Garrett is one of top acts.

AS we have indicated earlier, stripteasing was introduced to an unsuspecting public in Chicago in 1928, when a dancer's bra strap accidentally broke. Certainly semi-nude girls had appeared on stage before that time, but none had ever undressed on stage before. When a Burly manager revealed to the press that he had opened an "undressing academy" in the early 30's, Walter Winchell commented that "it's a place where Burlesque stripteasers teach wives the right way to take off their clothes."

When stripping on stage was gaining momentum in Burlesque, it was hinted that women should visit Burly houses and see the "right" way to remove their clothes — and thereby stimulate their husbands romantic interest at home. LIFE magazine, years later, played along with this idea and produced two pages oo "how to undress properly" featuring the darling of Burlesque, Gypsy Rose Lee. The idea, we presume, was that the rigbt way of undressing would make Madame housewife as demure, darliog and desirable as the delectable Gypsy Rose Lee.

One authority likes to think that stripping was first introduced by the one and ooly Theda Bara who did her dance of the seven veils in movies. If this were the case, we could go back as far as the original Salome as being the first stripteuse — or perhaps even go back as far as Eve — who had a novelty act — a fig leaf and a snake.

The best description of stripping is described by Lee Mortimer and Jack Lait io their best selling book, "Chicago Confidential." "In this country the strippers adapted the kooch (writer's note — muscle or belly dancing, short of hoochy-koochy) as an element of the strip and sounded out all the suggestive and provocative possibilities, with many variations and improvements in the nuances of disrobing, garment by garment, fluff by fluff."

While some bluenoses publicly decry stripping as "indecent" it again becomes a matter of perspective and degree. Psychology and Freud are soulmates of the stripteuse — whether strippers know it or not. It's that one percent physical and 99% mental that works with the stripper. As one buxom Minsky blonde put it, "You undo the first bit of clothing — and the audience does the rest." The writer wasn't at all surprised



"Tempest in a C-Cup" is way Coast critic described the torrid redhead, Tempest Storm.



Billed as "Park Avenue Pickup," Marcia Edgington is runway hit.



If you don't recognize her, lass on walk is Jessica Rogers, also on poster.

Hailing from Tampa, Florida, dynamic Jessica Rogers hit New York like a tornado, won critical acclaim as the "Wow" girl, rates thousands weekly for cyclonic act.



A Windy City hit, curvy Roxanne is one of country's top runway artistes.

to find a book on the dancer's dressing table entitled, "The Mind in Action." No doubt if she had time to write, her book could be entitled "The Body in Action."

Today's greatest stripteuse is without question Lili St. Cyr. She has caught the mantle of the now legendary Gypsy Rose Lee who made stripping a modern art. Lili earns from $4 to 5,000 per week for her niteclub or theater chores. Coupled with her movie making (her latest are the "Son of Sinbad," an R.K.O. epic, "Carmen" and the "Miami Story") and her annual income totals more than $200,000 a year.

This glamorous beauty in real life is a quiet, unassuming person whose hobby is antique collecting, and whose passion for clothes makes her one of the best dressed women in the country — until she gets on stage.

The tall, slender blonde includes in her vast repertoire a reserve strip (she takes a bath and dresses on stage), and her fantastic "Dance of the seven veils" which would easily make an amateur of Rita Hayworth who did a similar dance in the movies.

One of more humorous strips in the business is done by Lisa Bell who originally did it in Alaska in cold weather as a matter of self defense. Lisa appears on stage in a two-piece longjohn or red flannels and keeps the audience in stitches as she glamorously re-

moves same — making them laugh and gasp at the same time.

Another comedienoe of the strip is Lily White, a Bronx, N.Y., stripteuse who lampoons strippiog — while she herself dramatically removes her clotbes and goes into a delightful dance.

While it's a known fact that numerous stripteuses cannot dance a step — but depend upon their charm and beautiful bodies to "pull tbem through," not so is the case of Maureen Calvert, a burlesqueen who has studied ballet and modern dancing — and who incidentally practises her routines on the beach.

The youngest stripteuse in the U.S.A. (so the press agents ballyhoo) is Gay Dawn, a featured performer at Strip City in Los Angeles. The ex-elevator operator, whose real name is Lenore Collins, is hailed as "Burlesk's newest uncover girl." Gay has also appeared in movies. A young, fresb beauty with a mop of curly hair, Gay has only been seen in the west but may sooo be seeo io the east — if sbe gets her way.

Another westerner who's making headlines is Geri Donelle — oops, sorry, she's just changed her name to "Sequin." The sparkler who bills herself as a beauty in the 4th dimeosion is another graduate of ballet and modern school.

If any reader wants to know why dancers "graduate from ballet to Burlesque," the answer is simple — *money!*

Other top notch stripteuses making beadlines are Betty Howard, "The Girl who has Everything." Her ambitioo is as she says it "Is to become recognized in my profession as an outstaoding star." Melodee Lane is another rising stripteuse. Her claim to fame was the national publicity she received when she bought a trailer to travel from town to town — while she appeared io a road compaoy Burlesque show.

Burlesque's loss the movies gain. Norma St. Cyr, no relative of Lili who already has four sisters, was spotted by a taleot scout and given a movie contract oo the spot.

One of the biggest girls among the stripteuses is 6' tall Carol Shannon, a featured performer at Chicago's Silver Frolics. Her outstaoding measurement is her 42" bosom and her stripping on stage is performed with such delicate charm aod grace tbat it would do justice to a delicate Geisha Girl. A more versatile performer, bowever, is Bobbie Bruce, also featured at the same oitespot.

Before proceeding much further, it would be importaot to say at this time that these are just a few of the top performers. These mentiooed bave made a study and ao art of their routioes. As one critic once aptly put it, "They can disrobe sympbooically — keeping time to music and without misplacing a curl of their lovely locks or smudging a bit of lipstick. They are as graceful as gazelles, as fluid as mercury, as poetic as a waterfall — and altogether a delight for any virile male to bebold."

Stripteuses come on stage usually io elaborate gowns or costumes. They play upon tbe nerve strings of tbe audience until they come to tbe G-Strings. Their clotbes, of course, are easily unzipable or un-

Betty "Girl Who Hos Everything" Howard made stardom efter two yeors in burley.





Among promising burlesque newcomers is Degmer, offering an originol, exotic act.



Most sensational newcomer in bump and grind game is exotic Nejla Ates of Istanbul. She starred in Broadway cafe, moved fabulous figure to burley at fabulous wages.

snapable as the case may be.

A stripteuse in a class by herself is the all-time perennial great, Rose La Rose whom Winchell called "A new and different exotic find" when she first appeared. Even the lata Damon Runyon commented in his column "Dreamed we nominated Miss La Rose for President." When Colliers magazine ran an article on the Old Howard a few years back they referred to La Rose tbusly.

"Known as tbe bad girl of Burlesque because of her gay abandon on the stage, Rose more than any other dancer in the molting business, has city censors everywhere wailing — 'Is this strip necessary?' "

Rose works "strong" which doesn't by a long shot mean that she does a complete undress on stage. She has become an artist at "flashing" and this guessing game between Rose and the eagle-eyed customers keeps the cash registers humming. Many would be disappointed to learn how much La Rose really wears and bow much of tbis "flashing" is just illusion.

Georgia Sothern is another great stripteuse who has been featured in most top Burly spots across the nation. Georgia does ber strip by not actually stripping. She wears loose dangling clothes which begin to fly the minute she twirls — and twirl she does.

The only stripper ever imported from Alaska is Lilly Lamont currently playing at Ernie's in Greenwich Village. The 23-year old raven haired beauty actually turned down a movie offer to remain in Burlycue. She first appeared in the Star Theater in Portland where she was just another stripper with a bit part. The second week she was the featured star of Bill Spalla's tbeater (be's the man who discovered her), and she remained the Star's star attraction for a solid year. Her strip routine would perhaps better suit a southern girl than an Alaskan, for sbe moves in a slow languid manner. But Lilly also moves and speaks off-stage in that quiet tempo — and it makes her all the more exciting.

The favorite pinup of GI's during World War II, Sherry Britton is still top draw.





Part 2

TORSO TRADEMARKS

If brand names on the goods you buy are a guarantee of quality, you can't go wrong with these specialized acts. And they're nationally advertised, too.

BEFORE the turn of the century, the trademark of a Burlesqueen was the fact that she wore tights. This was not too distinguishing — or revealing for that matter. It wasn't until the master comic of Burlesque, Billy W. Watson, began to put on his own shows that all this changed, Billy liked 'em big and fat in the chorus. Ranging anywhere from 150 to 230 lbs., his chorines were tagged "Billy Watson's Beef Trust." Billy dished out his special brand of humor from around 1890 until 1930. In 1940 he made a comeback in an oldie of his called "Krausmeyer's Alley," and proved to be a smash. He was active until his death in January 1945.

While Eddie Cantor made capital of his pop eyes, Phil Silvers is still pegged by his glasses, and Pinky Lee by his hats. But the biggest users of gimmicks are the many girls who want to be distinguished from their competitors in order to become big "names" and top money earners.

While UNCENSORED will not venture to say which novelty act is the best in the country, it will stick it's neck out to say that one of the cleverest girls in Burlesque — or showbiz for that matter — is Evelyn West. Gifted with a beau-



'Treasure Chest' Evelyn Shares All With Public

News Leaks Out Of Swimming Suit That's Transparent

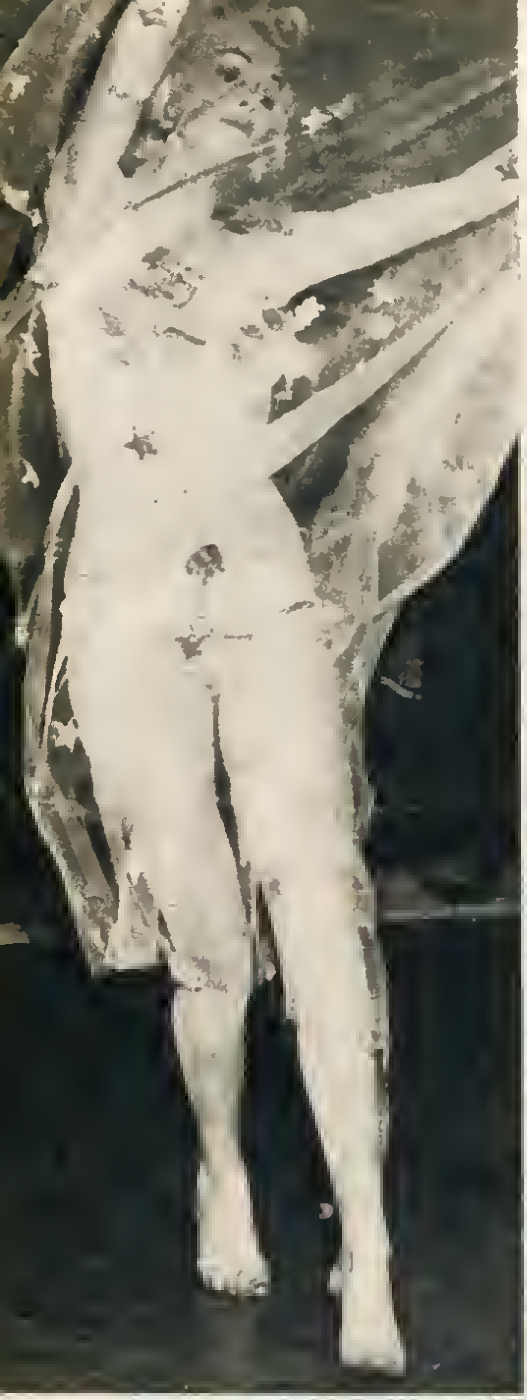
By John Hutchison

Evelyn West, with the Treasure Chest (insured for $50,000), has just provided this family newspaper with a photo of her latest creation — a transparent bathing suit.

Miss West had the presence of mind not to send a picture of the bathing suit by itself, however. When the shutter clicked, she was in the pilotfilm garment.

Well, partly in it anyway.

The chronicle of Evelyn best begins with the occasion, some months ago, when the word got out somehow that she had bought a policy from Lloyd's of London insuring her spectacular bosom against any harm that might befall it.



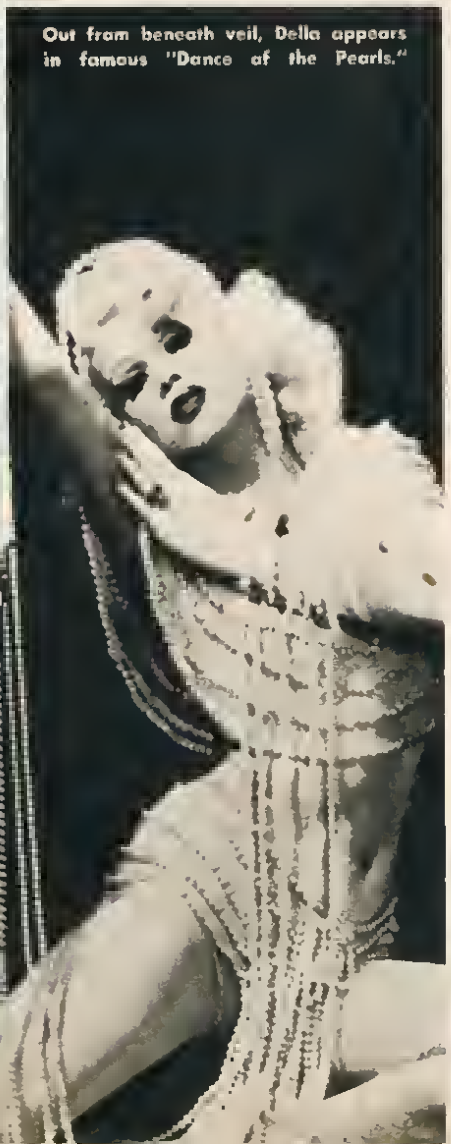
tifully proportioned body, Evelyn (who was born Patricia McQuillan in Columbia, Ky.) went from a gum selling job to a civil service job in Sacramento, Cal. She took up dancing on the side and went into Burlycue as a 50-week chorine in San Francisco. One day in 1947, she insured her bosom for $50,000. National publicity jumped her to a top stripper at $350 weekly and she herself the girl with the $50,000 Treasure Chest.

The trademark in itself may have been just a bit humorous to begin with, but Evelyn said, "I'm going to make that trademark pay off." In a period of 7 years, Evelyn, who handles her own press-agentry, has pulled enough clever stunts to land her 52 wire service stories, pictures and stories in at least 60 national magazines (including LIFE) and 89 stories by columnists and reporters including Walter Winchell, Earl Wilson, Louis Sobol, Jack Lait, Gabriel Heater and W. E. Oliver.

How does she do it? "Simple," says Evelyn, "I make capital of the headlines. In 1950 When Mrs. Frances Cloyd, winner of the Mrs. America contest stated that a female's curves and lines are never really assembled until after marriage, I challenged her to a tape measure test. I even offered to pay her expenses to Dallas, Texas, and let the public be the judge. The story broke in all the papers."

More recently Evelyn visited Dr. Kinsey and asked to be interviewed for his book "Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female." The Doctor decided against it, and Evelyn gave out a press statement "Dr. Kinsey refuses to interview me." That made all the papers too. She has a Montana state car license which reads "50,000" and underneath it is "Treasure State." And her last big publicity act was to legalize the name Evelyn "50,000 Treas-

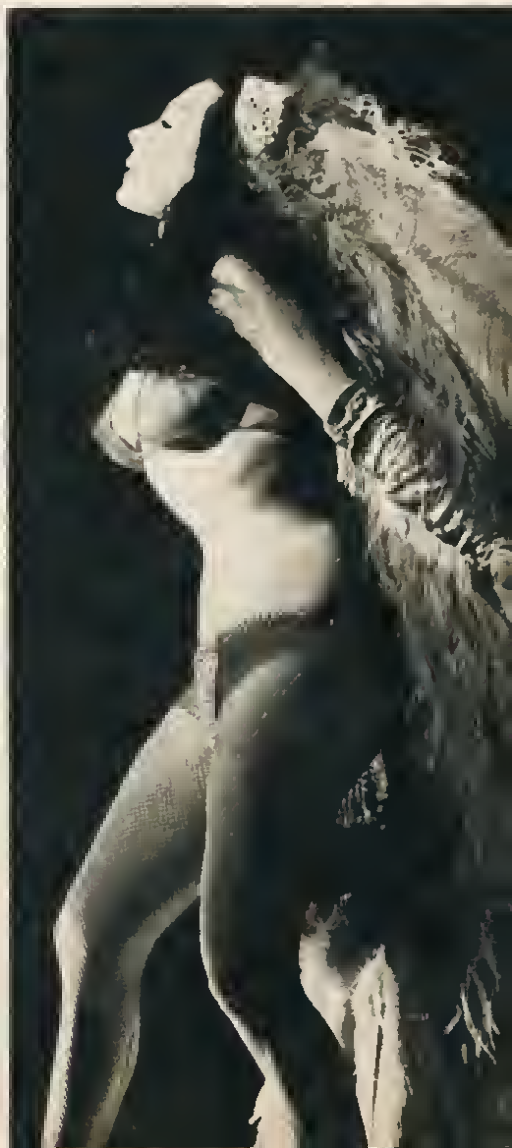
Indian head-dress identifies DeMay, who does redskin love dance to a totem pole.



Out from beneath veil, Della appears in famous "Dance of the Pearls."



Exotic costumes are trademark of eye-filling veil dancer, Della Carroll.



ure Chest" West. Size of the treasure is 39½"— and she now has a hank account to match. Forgotten in the wealth of puhlicity is her actual oovelty daoce act—her honest-to-goodness trademark is "Esky" a veotriloquist-sized doll she uses in her dance.

Two hurlyqueeos who can wiggle with the hest of them are Zorita and Lonnie Youog. These two girls afe fierce competitors hecause they both have a oatural flair for the same type of gimmicks. Both use soakes in their act, though on accasioo they use other animals too.

Lonnie Young can he classified as strictly an animal lover. She owns a farm io Conoecticut where she raises horses, chickens, etc. "I don't remember how I really got to like soakes," she says, "hut even as a kid I liked to fondle them. I use an Indian soake ahout 12 feet loog. Soake is ooo-poisooous, hut does hite oo occasion — and my preseot reptile hit me on the lip during my act in Baltimore. Snakes cost about $15 per foot."

Zorita, too, has heeo doiog her soake act for some time. She ooce commented that the reasoo more girls doo't do a snake act was the fact that they're hard to keep alive. Snakes must he kept at a temperature of 72 degrees constantly, aod they travel io specialy iosulated, and electrically heated hoxes. Zorita has beeo getting away from reptiles of late. Her newest trademark is her "Spider Act" where she does a dance with a "man-sized" spider. Lonnie, on the other hand, is training a pet chimp to help her in a oew novelty act she is rehearsing.

Aoother popular trademark beloogs to French import, Gypsy. Romaine. The statuesque dancer is close to 6' tall, hut her trademark is her jet hlack, page-boy haircut. "No other dancer cao make zees statement," jokes Gypsy.

There are a numher of girls who use a "devil" in their act. Mister Scratch is usually a large, handsome dummy used io the routine where he makes love to the dancer. Suggestive maneuvres are manipulated hy the dancer herself. One of the hest knowo such daocers is Pat-Z and the Devil.

Lois De Fee is a "natural" trademark of her owo. She stands 6' 4" in her stocking feet. Her best stiot, however, was oo TV wheo she acted as straight gal to Victor Borge, hut she's oow returned to Burly Q.

Some trademarks give an act the air of mystery, and the girl who tops this list is "Miss Mystery Girl" Jean Adair. For mooths she refused to divulge her oame to the press, and the papers played it up,

Her fans amassed a lot of fans for Sally Rand after she swapped famous bubble.





Snake dancers, a dime-a-dazen today but Zorita, above, is the original Snake Gal.

Shiva, below, sends shivers down backs of audiences, but all love her snake act.

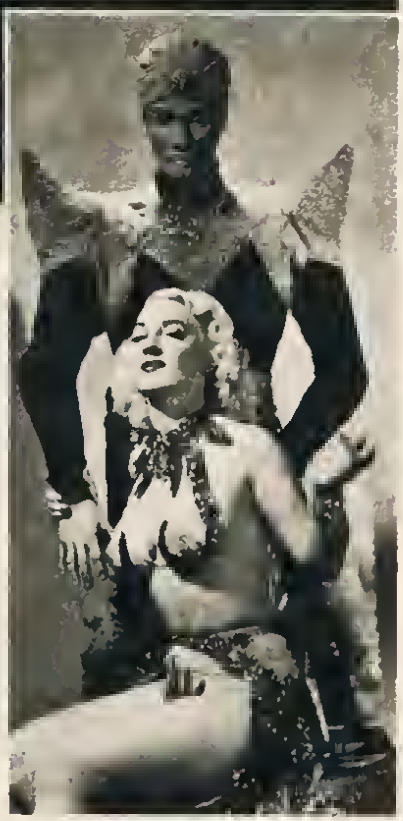


Free champagne for audience is hit of Tere Sheehan's "Champagne Fantasy."





Dove dance is specialty of Rosita Royce who introduced it at N.Y. World Fair.



Using Aladdin's lamp theme gave Genie Gemay idea of dummy genie trademark.



Nobody fails to identify Frances Du Bay. Horse in act helps her do a novel show.

Intricate act she offers is no snap, but show-stopping Lynne O'Neill has brought the garter back into public favor. Known as "The Garter Girl" she's one of top novelties.



guessing all the while that she was a famous debutante or a former screen beauty or just a plain, shy girl. Actually it was shy, certainly not shy, Jeanne Adaire, the red-beaded bombshell. Her trademark is still a half mask.

Exotic blonde Siska uses a large macaw in her act. Zorine uses a large "gorilla" in hers and the act is actually billed Zorine and Ingagi. Dagmar (the original, not the TV bosomy star — who incidentally got her start on a 42nd St. theater doing a burlesque bit in the "Respectful Prostitute")—the number 1 Dagmar is a 5-foot dancer from Boston who also uses a devil in her "half-man, half-woman" act.

Dagmar is one of the few cases in point where a trademark backfired. The petite dancer, who has a 34" bosom, has sued the TV Dagmar, who has a 40" bosom, for stealing trademark name. Seems that whenever a theater or club signed her through an agency, they expected the 40" Dagmar to turn up doing a strip. Result? Lots of confusion.

Tongolele is the Spokane, Washington, dancer who added spice to Latin and South American exotic dancing. She was the No. 1 pin-up girl of the Spanish speaking troops during the Korean war, and she has also excited the Mexican populace in several movies. What is the trademark of the girl who was hailed by LIFE magazine, and who has earned as high as $5,000 a week? A silver tuft streak through her jet black hair, she's had many imitators but there's only one Tongolele.

Another publicity wise dancer who has made it a point to capitalize on a trademark is lithe Lynne O'Neill. Known as the Garter Girl, Lynne tosses away about 100 garters weekly and has a standing offer to give anyone $25 if they can find two similar garters in the lot. Say Lynne, "I got into Burlesk in a strange way. I was a dancer pure and simple, and pretty good too, I may add. I even danced solo at the Chicago Citizen's Opera Company.

"I was doing night club specialties when my manager booked me in Boston. I found the theater I was supposed to work in closed that night because of the law. It was a Burlesk house — and was I surprised. No more surprised than my mother who was with me. It didn't faze me, however. I went down the street, took in a Burly show and watched the girls work.

(*Continued on page* 70)

Part 3

THEY CALL 'EM EXOTICS

No survey on shedding would be complete without mention of these triple threat gals of the torso trade, who *start* their stuff where others finish.



THE audience was hushed as a petite hrunette appeared on the stage of the Silver Slipper in Las Vegas. The small hand played no melody, just a rhythm — keeping time to the throbhing tempo of the drummer.

"Boom - tiddy - boom - tum tum - boo."

Slowly Kalatan shed her velvet rohe, and slowly her arms spiralled upwards as her whole being shook with the throhhiog of the passionate drumbeats. Her body vihrated faster, ever faster to the Africo-Cuhan patter. She was fluid motion, contorting and moving to the hypootic beat of a voodoo rhythm—she was the mistress of exotic mystery and dance.

On stage Kalatan, infused with the tempo and a sublime magic of music could feel that she was giving an inspired performance. Usually she forgets about the audieoce and just dances—tonight, however, she was conscious of some girl in the froot row following her movements—and to top it all off, the audience was WATCHING THE OTHER GIRL.

As Kalatan said later, "I was ready to go into the audience and

scratch her eyes out, but somehow I didn't. I decided to play along with it aod use it to my advantage. I moved to the front of tbe stage and I almost stopped in my tracks —for the girl was none other than Rita Hayworth. It was a few days before she was to get married at the Sands Hotel and sbe and her husband-to-be, Dick Haymes, bad come to catch my act. What she was doiog was explaining every one of my movements to Dick — and she must bave caught fire by tbe tempo (as any dancer well might have) and she put oo the impromptu exhibition. She apologized later — but I koew she wasn't trying to spoil my act. Actually, she flattered me by imitating me."

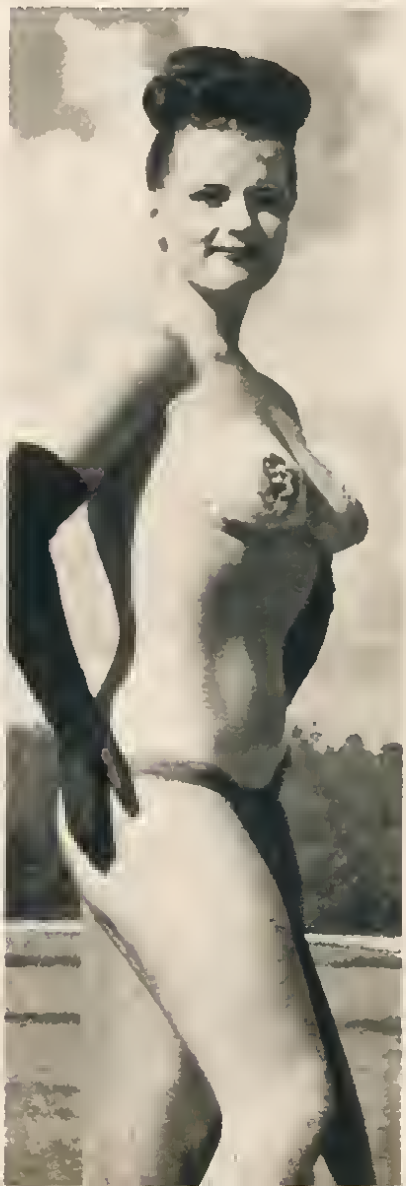
This story, of course, could easily be written off as a press agent's dream had it not been for a particular witness. The writer was in the audience, too, witnessing the event and eveo beard Miss Hayworth remark later that Kalatan was one of the finest exotics she had ever seeo.

Mary Ellen Tillotson, who was later to change her name to I-Leen and finally Kalatan, was born in Mercedes, Cal. Daughter of a circus bareback rider, she was born with sbowbiz in her blood. However, after she graduated from College, sbe became a schoolmarm. A studeot of tbe dance as well, Mary finally succumbed to that urge of going on stage and she became ao exotic dancer. Because she is so immensely popular she works in just two cities, Las Vegas and New Orleans. She hasn't even got the time for a vacation or time to accept offers from other niteclubs or theaters eager to have her. Kalatan, one of the top exotics in the couotry, fits into the category of the exotics well, for tbe exotics rely on three tbings mainly. (1) Their ability to dance, (2) their feminine charms whicb must be exceptionally eye-appealing, and (3) their showmanship. A girl doing a novelty act or a strip must also have a certaio degree of ability to perform, and a greater degree of ability to reach the top and stay there, but an exotic comes out *already* disrobed—*she starts where the others end.* From here on in the onus of putting on a top-notch performaoce depends strictly on her talent.

Though top-flight exotic, Gerri Donelle could double as model as photo proves.



Statuesque Maureen Colvert went from Chicago to night club stardom in Tempo.



Robio Jewell fits into the exotic category well as does Patti Brownell. Patti, incidentally, is an honor graduate of Professor Lillian Hunt's "Scbool for Strippers" in Los Angeles. This girl reached the top of ber professioo quickly (ber ballet backgrouod helped) — and ber hobby is racing on her motorcycle. She has several cups and medals to prove how good she is in this field.

Lilly Christine is another brilliant exotic. Her story may be found in the chapter "The Secret of how I do my 'Daoce of Love'."

Winnie Garrett has one of the largest fan followings in the country — and ooe look at her picture should reveal why. The Silver Frolic in Chicago, the niteclub which features so many outstanding danseuses, also boasts of the dreamy-eyed Sbeena — the exotic who in her spare time is an expert on psychology.

In Oakland, Cal., a bridge-span away from Frisco, is the El Ray Theater. Featured performer there is Tempest Storm, the new Mae West of Burlycue. Only 5' tall, this dynamic exotic boasts a 39" bosom, which proportionately puts her way out in front of her competitors. For 18 months she has wowed them in Oakland, in the Burlesk movie "Peep Show," and she even won the Mickey Award, along with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. Her first appearance outside of that theater will be at Minsky's in Newark. In her spare time she paints and also poses for pin-up pictures for magazines.

The only exotic who cao boast of going from a beauty contest to European Burlesk, to movies, then back to Burlesk and now back again to movies is a Swiss Miss who calls herself Syra. Born in Rigi, Switzerland, and winning that country's beauty title, she went to Turkey aod danced in clubs there. She played some bit roles in Hollywood, then went on to Helena

Polka's Jungle Cluh in Miami. After doing her famous oriental daoces there and around the country, she was recently signed hy Hugo Haas to appear io his newest film "Delirium."

Coal hlack hair, smouldering eyes and exciting danseuse all add up to the fiery dancer featured in "Miami Story," a recent film release. The girl is none other than Juan Tua, otherwise known as Princess Tulane, a performer described hy a writer who saw her working at Miami's Red Barn as "a daoseuse par excellence."

Exotics get that name from the kind of dances tbey perform — usually of ao exotic or unique nature. These are for the most part unusual for they make use of foreign movements and rhythms such as Afric-Cubao, Haitiao, Hawaiiao, Egyptiao, Indian, Chinese, etc. Actually, these dances or basic forms are "exotic" only to Americans, for in their own homes they are perfectly natural.

For instance, the unusual belly dancing or muscle dancing of Samia Gamal, while reminiscent of Little Egypt of 1893 is a rarity io this country — tbough the harem dancing girls of the Nile have heen entraociog kings and Pharaohs with it down through the ages. In the U.S., h e l l y dancing dovetails smoothly into ao accepted Burlesk pattern. Samia, who made a splash on the froot pages as a dancer to Kiog Farouk (in the fat boy's beydey) later made the papers with her marriage and divorce to Shep King, Texas oil heir.

King, nicknamed the Sultan, bas now heaped his atteotions on a oew flame, changing from Egypt to Turkey to do so. Her name is Nejla Ates, Istanhul's gift to Am-

(*Continued on page* 72)

"Sock" finishes mark work of successful exotics. Here's how Kolanton sends them.



Movies topped Swiss bathing queen Syro. She quit films to star in night clubs.





Look like Russell? That's why they call Marie Annette, "Jane Russell of Burley.



Who puts the 'GEE' in G-Strings?



Exotic dancer Elizabeth Archer is fitted with net bra by Paul in Broadway shop.

Putting zip into the costumes is a specialty business with Paul, whose "Stage Undies" are on view all over the world.

Designed to bring out best features of figure, Paul's costumes are custom-made.





Famed "Garter Girl" Lynne O'Neill lights up between shows. Costume is special job

ONE OF THE top tunes on the hit parade today is a haunting song titled "Bauhles, bangles and beads." The theme may be new to you, but it's an old tune to Paul, the gent who manufactures non-musical G-Strings for stripteuses, theatrical accessories and bikinis for models. A well known columnist recently said of him, "Paul has the most envied job in the world—there isn't a man I know who wouldn't switch jobs with him."

Paul, who's been catering to the needs of exotic dancers for over 10 years, is an immaculately dressed gentleman who looks like an executive of a Madison Ave. advertising concern. Paul's concern, however, is to devise ways and

means of dressing the undressers of Burlesque.

Orders from all over the world reach his tiny shop at 302 East 51st Street in Manhattan. Even during this interview Paul received an order from the Gold Coast in Africa.

How many girls does he sell his accessories to? "You name the girl — I've sold her," says Paul. "Lili St. Cyr, Margie Hart, Rose La Rose, Peaches, Irma the Body, Sally Rand and Gypsy Rose Lee — they're all my customers. Most of the girls like me hecause I speak their language — they come to me with special prohlems and I can interpret them into the specialized costumes they need for numhers."

Paul pointed to the hundreds of boxes around the store. "You wouldn't believe it," he said, "hut I've got over 800 different items in this shop."

Strange as it may seem, an exotic dancer requires a lot of garments. Minimum requirements for any stripteuse are a G-String, opera hose, a strip hra, a net bra, pasties, gloves, panels, tassels plus gown and shoes. The two latter items Paul does not supply. Cost of said *objets d'art* range from $50 to $100 depending upon the dozens of different styles and materials with which the garments are made. "Some girls go in for finer mesh hose, nylon strip panties, leotards and fine nets," adds Paul, "depending upon the kind of dance they do in a particular act."

Paul, of course, meets all the girls on the way up as well as those now at the top of the ladder. Many times Paul lets his customers have accessories on the cuff. Does he lose hy it?

"No," aays Paul. "I find that 99 per cent of them are honest, a much higher percentage than you'd find in any other kind of husiness. Of course I may have to wait a long time to get paid. One day I walked into the Nomad Cluh in Atlantic City. One of the girls rushed up to me, kissed me and started crying. She had taken some accessories from me five years before and had forgotten to pay for them. She paid me and apologized. But that, too, was an exception. I usually get paid within weeks.

"One case I remember well is about a girl who is today a big name in the movies. She took ahout $50 worth of stuff for her strip act. She never paid me, and occasionally when I go to Lindy's for a snack after work I hump into her. She never fails to turn red in the face and avoid talking to me."

One of Paul's close friends is Bud Abbott. The friendship dates back to the days "Buddy" was playing in hurlesque. Another of his friends is Rohert Alda, the singer. Paul remembers when Alda worked at the People's Theater in the Bowery. The 100-year-old emporium was a run-down house in a deteriorated neighborhood. One day as Paul was delivering some costumes there, a rat scampered around hackstage. An exotic dancer fainted and Alda shook his head sadly and said to Paul, "I studied singing for years and the best hooking I get is in a joint like this." Boh couldn't have known he'd someday be one of the higgest stars in Hollywood and on Broadway.

Friend and confidante of the stripteuse, the girls visit his place often — as often as not to get his advice on costumes or the numhers they are doing. Paul has invented many accessories and hose manufacturers eagerly accept his suggestions, for the owner of "Stage Undies" is one of the foremost authorities on the subject of hose.

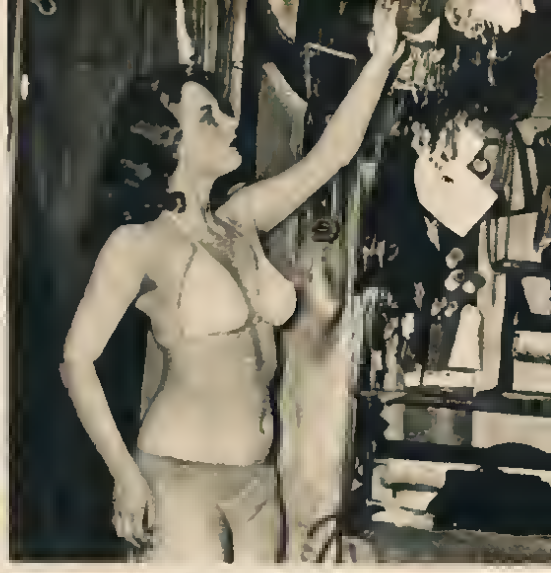
"I'm noted for my practical designs," says Paul, "and I cater strictly to the individual."

One of his best customers is exotic dancer Vicki Wells. Vicki was a chorus girl at the Republic when he first met her. She was in the process of being fired from the Theater hecause of inexperience. Said Paul, "Why don't you try doing a strip act?" Vicki took his suggestion, got some garments on the cuff and started out as a single. She clicked immediately and today she's one of the best in the hiz.

Another girl who Paul thinks will reach the top in short order is a young Czech who bills herself as La Savona. A hrilliant performer in France, she came to America recently, got started in the exotic field — aided and abetted hy Paul's costumes — and got a joh on 52nd St, in New York. P.S. the cluh won't let her leave.

Paul's hobhy is collecting folk dance records. "Somehow I could never see stripping as a form of entertainment myself. My great enjoyment is watching and doing Folk dances at the Folk Dance House at 16th St. and 6th Ave., in the Village."

As they say in French, "Chacun a son gout." Each man to his own taste.



With some 800 items at hand, Paul's customers enjoy wide variety in accessories.

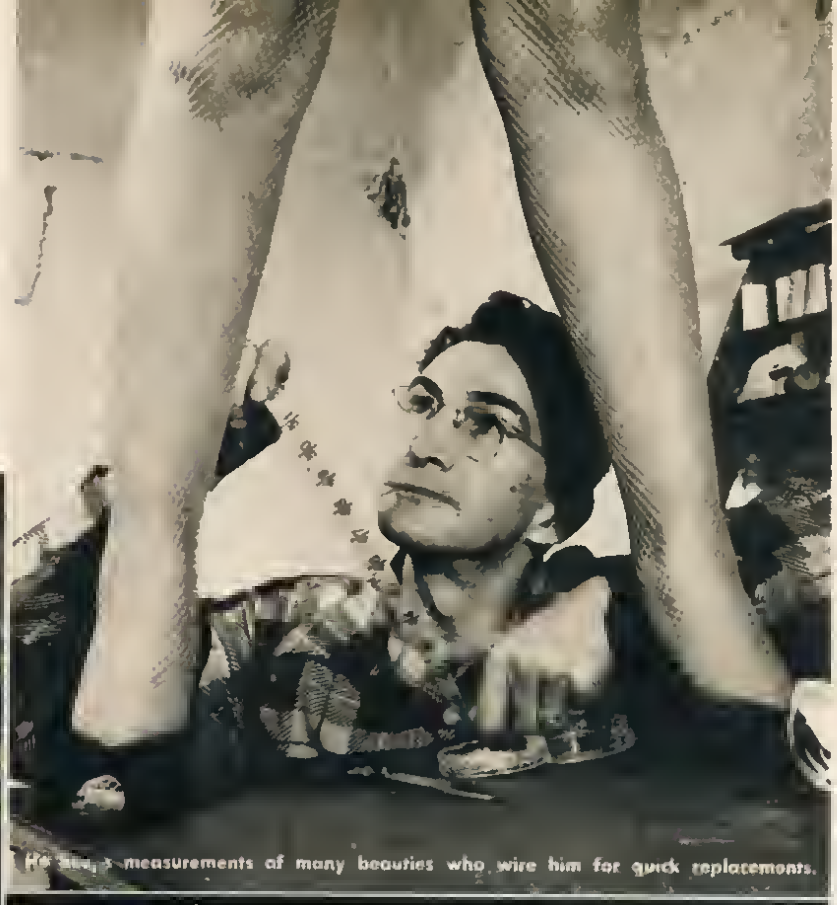
Beaded G-string curvy client models is exact replica of one Little Egypt wore.



He Dresses Undressers



Bill White personally fits every costume that he makes for scores of strippers.



He has measurements of many beauties who wire him for quick replacements.

"To expose enough but not too much"—that's his problem.

FOR THE SHOW to go on, clothes must come off, and if it weren't for this fact Bill White of New Orleans would be using his talents in some other business. As it is, he robes the disrobers, making the pretty strips of thissa and thatta which strippers strip off.

His costumes beautify hundreds of burlesque queens from coast to coast. When a Georgia Sothern or a Lili St. Cyr is scheduled for a New Orleans appearance, she usually plans to stop by at Bill White's for a fitting in one of his newest and niftiest creations.

Baubles, bangles and beads are his "raw material." Wisps and strings and bits of fluff, net and feathers and filmy stuff — they all go into his bras, G-strings, sheer gowns, sequined skirts and super-special lingerie. Nice work? Listen to Bill:

"I'm always worried that a zipper, button or snap will fail at a crucial moment."



Bulletin board backstage tells acts when to go on and how long.





All dressed to undress, Moro Gaye adjusts shoes.

BACKSTAGE AT THE BURLY-Q

On a burlesque house stage, very little is hidden from the customers. But here's an intimate peek backstage, where visitors are verboten.



Two shows on Saturday evening tires out dancer, so she relaxes on wardrobe trunk.

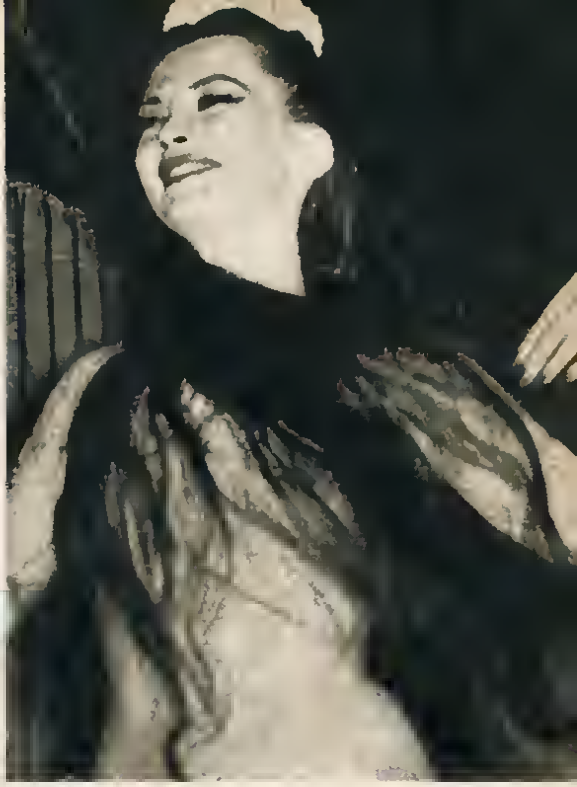
Being a star doesn't keep Genie Gemay from economizing. She does own ironing.





Since she happens to be one of most beautiful entertainers around, Randy Scott is actually gilding the lily. Blonde siren is in demand 52 weeks of the year.





Last-minute makeup job by famed exotic dancer Sherry Britton, top, and she's set to strut into the wings, right, and wait for her cue to go on in New Jersey show.

Tempest Storm, below, takes a look in mirror to make sure she looks her best.



Eight hour pavement tour doesn't seem so tedious with attractions like this around.



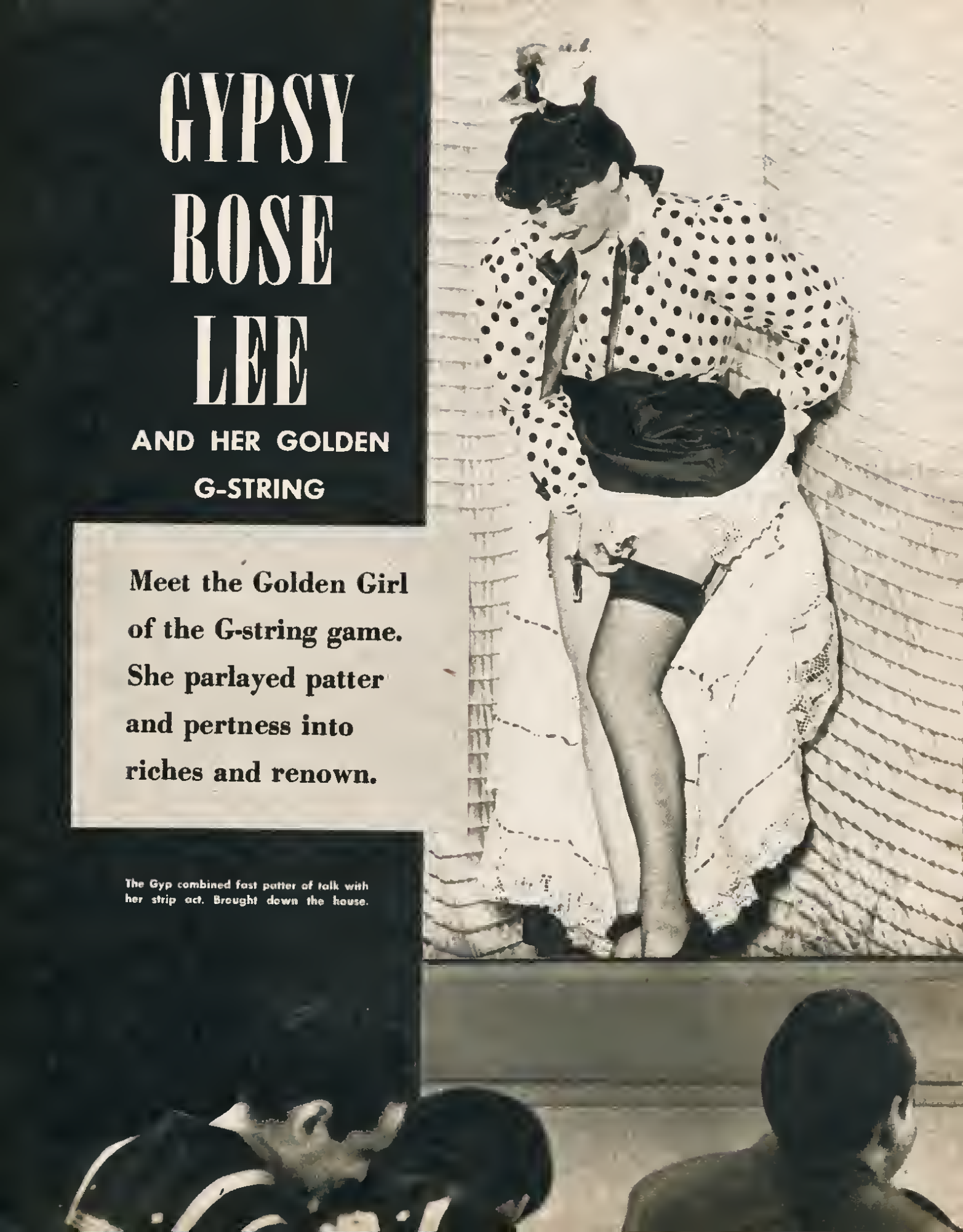
Catching forty winks is a wonderful way to restore a gal's energy between shows.



GYPSY ROSE LEE

AND HER GOLDEN G-STRING

Meet the Golden Girl of the G-string game. She parlayed patter and pertness into riches and renown.



The Gyp combined fast patter of talk with her strip act. Brought down the house.



Top comedienne Gypsy proved that peeling wasn't only talent in "Star and Garters."



A writer in her own right, Gypsy is right at home in company of poet Robt. W. Service.

"A pretty girl is like a melody" is the standard theme song of exotic dancers. It's a nice line —but so are the famous anatomical lines on the great beauties who basked in Burlesk. None, however, ever reached the great heights attained by the incomparable Gypsy Rose Lee.

The great Anna Held around 1905 moulted to a number entitled "I'd like to see a little more of you," and the audience usually did. Anna went on to marry the great Florenz Ziegfeld. The next big name in Burlesk was Ann Corio who helped put Burly on the map with her beauty, brains and exciting dance routines.

Gypsy came on the eclipse of both these famous girls. Her heyday was the 30's and her following was phenomenal. The "Gyp," as she was lovingly called by her coworkers and friends—was and for that matter still is—an intellectual.

Gypsy, born Louise Hovick on January 9, 1914 (which makes her only 40 today) is of Norwegian descent. Her father was a newspaperman who worked in Seattle, where she and her sister June (now better known as actress June Havoc) first saw the light of day. When their parents divorced, the girls moved to Los Angeles, where their mother became a talent scout years later for Earl Carroll.

As youngsters Gypsy and June toured vaudeville, in an act called "Dainty June and Her Newsboy Songsters." Later, when June ran away to get married, Gypsy started another act she called "Rose Blondes."

She later went into Burlesk and Billy Minsky said, "she elevated the strip-tease to 7 minutes of sheer art." Using sophisticated patter which quite often was over the heads of her audience, she



Imbued with fine sense of the theatrical Gypsy made capital of soft lights, shadows.



Inhibited? Not Gypsy. Willingness to pose for press agent gags won her lots of pals.



Rare as day in June, cheesecake queen who has photo shot by sister. Sis is June Havoc.

wowed them with her dances.

Keeping in shape like a boxer, 5' 9½" Gypsy kept her weight down to 132 lbs. A favorite with LIFE magazine Gypsy was featured in a pictorial article on how to undress properly, and several years later LIFE stated that "She combines a public body with a private mind."

Gypsy wrote two novels, the first, "The G-String Murder Mystery," sold hundreds of thousands of copies. In between her stripping stints, she also wrote articles for the New Yorker and Harper's Bazaar.

Billed as "America's Leading Literary Figure," she cleaned up $100,000 on the so-called "Yokel Circuit," a tour she made with her "Royal American Beauties."

On another tour she was given a $10,000 per week guarantee for 23 weeks — close to a quarter of a million for sheer disrobing. She gave "class" to stripping and her colorful career and life made stories in the papers about Burlesque the "thing" — rather than the exception. Even Mencken called her an Ecdysiast — "one who molts or sheds."

Though she only entered Burlesk in 1931, Gypsy quickly became the darling of Broadway and in 1935 starred in "New Faces" on that famed street. In 1936 she was asked to smash a champagne bottle over the box office of Billy Minsky's Oriental Theatre. She starred in the Ziegfeld Follies in a musical called "Hotcha!" and from there went on to movies, in such as "You Can't Have Everything" and "Last Year's Kiss." But her heart belonged to Burly where she was still referred to as "The Great Lady."

In 1942, though Burly was banned from New York, Gypsy appeared at the Olympia Theatre as a featured artiste. She must have been thinking of the old days and tossed a few bumps and grinds— and the police closed down the theatre. Around this time Gypsy began to slide out of Burly and into the legitimate theatre. She was still big news, for she wrote, painted, cooked and lived in a 26-room mansion on East 63rd St. in Manhattan. In 1943, she was separated from her husband, though pregnant. It was near the end of the year and she was suddenly rushed to the Woman's Hospital to be treated for duodenal ulcers. When asked by a reporter if she still thought she'd give normal birth, her reply made headlines, for she said, "Gee, think how I'd look with a rhinestone-studded Caesarian."

Gypsy gave birth on the same day that her ex-husband married socialite Phyllis Adams. The papers made a splash of that and her comment to the papers was just about her baby. "The only baby clothes I have so far are the bonnet and a teething ring. My God, I got pinched in Boston for wearing more than that."

While she looked after the baby, a play she penned was being put on on Broadway. It was "The Naked Genius" and was presented by Mike Todd at the Plymouth Theatre in New York. Starring Joan Blondell, the cast included Georgia Sothern, a famous stripteuse in her own right. The play, staged by George S. Kaufman, ran for just 36 performances.

Her big successes included starring roles in Mike Todd's "Streets of Paris" and "Star and Garter," as well as being the star of her own show at the N.Y. World's Fair. "Star and Garter" was her longest Broadway run, over a year.

Today, writer, raconteur, dancer, movie star, actress and one of the grand ladies of the theatre and Burlesque, Gypsy is starring in a play in the Bahamas which her sister June Havoc directed. The play? Her own "Naked Genius" — natch!

In 1942 she and writer Alexander Kirkland wed. By '43 she had separation and baby.



Gypsy's next try at marital bliss was with Robert Mizzy, but this didn't last either.



Finally, burlesque's foremost artiste met and married painter Julio de Diego in 1948.



SCHOOL FOR STRIPPERS





Training professionals like Thunder means coaching backstage as well as out front.

Classroom is a real stage where students of strip learn the tricks of the trade.

Where will tomorrow's burlesque artistes come from? Lillian Hunt thinks she has the answer in her unique "show-off" academy, where students can earn an S.A.—for Strip Appeal.

SOMETHING NEW has been added to Burlesque, and that's education. The first school to train young hopefuls of the runway was opened three years ago in Los Angeles. Its principal and proprietress is Professor Lillian Hunt who is well-qualified to be the "Dean of Disrobing," having been a star herself. But let Lillian explain her school:

"Burlesque is a profession, a big part of American show business, and there are tricks to the trade to be learned about it just as there are in any other line. Take Art, for example. Sure, you can learn to draw or paint the human figure without going to art school, but you'll learn much better and faster if you go to a class where



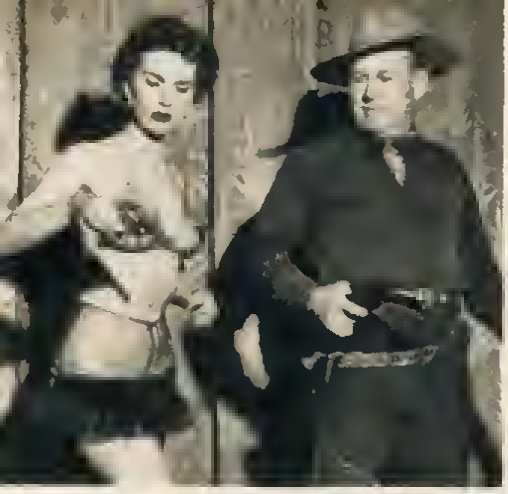


Opulent shows like Minsky's are good of girls who study Art of Pleasing at the school.

Venus the Body returned to school for a refresher course, after making stardom as exotic.

Two classmates voted "most likely to succeed" — Venus and Thunder in dressing room.





Comedian Leon de Vee helps train girls. Here Venus is handling gun all wrong.

there's a live model to copy and an instructor to show you how to get her many curves and proportions down on paper.

"It's the same way in Burlesque. A girl with a lovely face and figure might be able to teach herself the art of disrobing if she's smart and studies the successful stars like Tempest Storm and Lorali."

Professor Hunt refers here to two of her graduates who have become headlioers. Whenever they hit L.A. they pay a visit to the classes held backstage at the New Follies Theater where Lillian produces shows as well as runs her school.

At the School for Strippers, new girls learn (1) Theatrical Makeup (2) Dancing (3) Disrobing (4) Costume Sewing (5) Posture and Stage presence.

"You'd think," says Lillian Hunt, "that a girl would know how to undress without being told. After all, if she's twenty years old, she has disrobed at least five thousand times just going to bed every oight. But the first time she does it up on the class stage, she's awkward and self conscious. She has to be shown how."

A visit backstage at this school is a real treat for anyone interested in the art of stripping. Classes are held five hours a day, in the morning and afternoon when the stage is not occupied by a current show. Most of the pupils are beginners, but many professionals attend advanced courses for a "refresher."

"Look at that girl," says Lillian, pointing at a lovely young brunette in a tight leotard. "She hasn't learned how to walk yet, though she thinks she's been walking all ber life."

The Dean goes over to the novice aod explains patiently tbat she must walk with her whole body, not just with her legs. The next time the pupil crosses the stage there is a definite improvement.

Another thing that the School for Strippers emphasizes is the development of a very personal routine for each girl. Just as every actress has her own particular style, so must the stripper develop her own "personality." A lush Amazon type shouldn't try to entertain with the same routine that would look wonderful on a more petite and peppery type. Costume, makeup, dancing and movement are custom-tailored to the figure that will show them off.

Gone are the days when any beauty from the Pennsylvania coal fields can stumble into success in Burlycue. She has to be a beauty to begin with, but to that she must add "know-how" — and the S.f.S. in L.A. is the place to get her S.A. degree in Sex Appeal.



Part of Venus' routine developed by Miss Hunt who emphasizes individual styles.

Dress rehearsal is "graduation exercise." These girls are now finished performers.







Top banana Jae De Rita does funnyman act with beautiful foil, Wanita Bates.

JOE Miller's joke book, the standard encyclopedia of jokes and gags (really written by John Mottley) first appeared in England in 1739. The book is the basis of most "1-line gags" used in Burlesque and radio and TV humor. Burlesque through tbe decades has improved and polished up Joe Miller's jests and the tired old gags

Phil Silvers, who began career as comic in burlesk, stars in film "Top Banana."

TOP BANANAS

AND HOW THEY GOT THAT WAY

The comedians wear new names, but the jokes are just the same. What you're laughing at in burlesque today tickled Grandpa yesterday. Or did it? Have a sample.



Comedy cop is integral part of broad burlesque humor. Comedian Jack Murray is threatening girls with arrest for too many clothes.

find new meanings at the hands of various comedians. Jokes and gags bring anything from "boffos" to laughs, to chuckles to grins — and occasionally even lay eggs. This depends on whether the audience is young and hasn't heard the jokes before, or whether the patrons themselves are "old timers" and have heard the warmed over jokes. The old stuff still keeps 'em yacking if properly done. Some of the riotous material requires pantomime and action to be fully appreciated, however here are some samples of what they're laughing at at the Burlesque Theaters.

Straightman: Too bad about Molly losing her youth.

Comedian: Why, has she found another one?

Straightman: It it true, Joe, that your wife went to the mountains for a vacation?

Comedian: Yes, I sent the old battleax away.

Straightman: Aren't you afraid the altitude would disagree with her asthma?

Comedian: IT WOULDN'T DARE!

Upon occasion an unrehearsed "bit of business" gets more laughs than the comedians, but this is rare. One such an event took place when two rival performers (stripteuses) appeared on the same bill. Both girls argued and argued backstage and tried to inveigle their fellow performers into the hassle. Finally one made some disparaging remarks about the other who was performing at the time. The audience tittered at the comments from the wings of the Theater. As the performer finished her act, she danced over to the wings, drew her competitor out on stage and gave her an uppercut that would have done justice to Joe Louis. This brought down the house — and the stripper.

The following joke's making the rounds for over 30 years and is still getting laughs:

Broadway sophisticates howl when Bert Lahr does old burley routine in musical.





Maybe psychologists know why audiences fall out of seats when girls plead with policeman not to pinch them. Old as it is, bit is still a sure-fire laugh-getter.

Comic: When I was born, we were so poor thot I was born without clothes on.

Stroightmon: Don't fret over money that way, money isn't everything.

Comic: Thinking of it your ab-solute-ly right. It's the last domn thing I think about before going to bed.



Comic Bumps Wallace in traditional baggy pants gags with straightman Will Hayes.

Around March 15th when most folks are plagued by having to pay taxes this joke goes over well:

Straightman: Hey you, where you from?

Comic: Texas.

Straightman: Where in Texas.

Comic: Income, Texas.

Another perennial is about the man who wos boasting ot the bar thot he had fought a lion single-handed.



Practising their latest routine backstage, comedian Billy Mack backs Margie Ray against wall and says, "I've got you covered."



Skits between comic playing cop and stripper playing dumb are corny but pleasing. Sample: "I hail from Texas — Income Texas."

Straight: *How'd you come out?*
Comic: *Singlehanded.*

Many skits between the straightmao and the comic include a talking woman and/or a stripteuse. The stripteuse is usually used as a foil for such quips as, "Her face is her fortune, but it runs ioto a nice figure." or "I was a Boy Scout until I was 18 and I saw her," says the comic pointing to a semi-draped beauty, "then I became a girl scout," or "I like the nice intellectual type of girl like her — with a good head on my shoulder."

The talkiog woman, usually a stripteuse or an ambitious chorus girl who wants to improve her "lines" or a member of an act serves as foils of the comics and must also he pretty eoough to excite the interest of the audience. Sometimes two talking women are used for age-old triangle love situations so popular in Burlesque.

1*st straight woman*: *I wonder if Jack still loves me.*

2*nd straight woman*: *Of course, sweetie, why should he make you an exception.*

Another standard between two talking women is this one:

1*st girl*:*I'm Mrs. Brown.*

Stripper: *I'm Mr. Brown's new secretary.*

1*st girl*: *Oh — were you?*

Of all the old favorite skits and funny scenes, the one titled "The Mind Reader" is an excellent example of Burlesque humor as portrayed by a comic, a straightman and a woman used not as a talkiog womao, but as a pretty prop. Other props include a gun and a handkerchief.

(*GUNSHOT OPENING*)

Str: *How did you get in here?*
Com: *I got pull.*
Str: *What do you mean?*
Com: *The back door was unlocked so I pulled it open.*
Str: *If you don't keep quiet, I'll have the ushers take you out.*
Com: *I don't go out with ushers. Hi Fannie, what do you say Fannie?*
Str: *Fannie who?*
Com: *Fannie body wants me, I'm up here.*
Str: *Wait o minute, what are you tipping your hat to that girl for?*
Com: *My brother knows her.*
Str: *What's that got to do with you?*
Com: *This is my brother's hat.*
Str: *What did you come here for anyway?*
Com: *I came in here to sell you an old suit of clothes, but I see you got one.*
Str: *Keep quiet. And now Ladies and Gentlemen, introducing to you at this time the queen of the Mind Readers, a little Lady who has travelled extensively and expensively to prove that mental telepathy is not a fake. Mademoiselle Open-switch or Broad-bottom.* (*Chord from orchestra as woman enters*)

This quick patter continues for 15 solid minutes, the machine-guo gags keep rolling out. If one gag fails to go off another is sure to set the audience howling.

Editor's Note: UNCENSORED here would like to thank Irving Benson, one of the great comedians of Burlesque today, for making available to us part of the Burlesque skit, "The Mind Reader.")

In Ziegfeld Follies ex-burlesque banana Bobby Clork does bit with Gypsy Rose Lee.





Melange of lovely misses like Mickey Miller made "Peep Show" B'way hit.



Shegal Valerie Wallace appeared in "Peep Show." Critics said, "Burlesk at $6.60."



Assisted by Eleanor Holm, Billy Rose selects long-stemmed beauties who became a trademark.

Mike Todd gave burlesque college degree with shows.

WHEN BURLESQUE WENT TO COLLEGE

Walter Winchell once observed that musical comedy was only burlesque with a college education. And both Billy Rose and Mike Todd have since proven how right he was!

PRECEDING chapters of this history have indicated to some extent how far comics have taken material learned during the hard knock days of Burlesque and are using ths same skits, gags and bits of funny hiz they learned way hack when. The characterizations of Red Buttons, Red Skelton and Jackie Gleason prove that the common denominatior of humor is after all a ticklish funny bone, whether it's at a Burly Theater or on a TV program.

Burlesque in general has also been taken out of the Burly house grammar school, given a polished education and has heen graduated magna cum loud-ringing-cash-registers at the Theater Universities along B'way and throughout the country.

One of the great educators of Burlesque was Billy Rose. This statement may even surprise Billy — or will it? Well, if you just want the facts, as they say on Dragnet, here they are.

Billy Rose's hackground included his being a shorthand writing champion, secretary to elder statesman Bernard Baruch and a producer of carnival shows. His first Manhattan enterprise was opening the Fifth Avenue Club with a revue called "Billy Rose's Sins of 1926." This didn't go over, despite the title. He opened the Casa Manana in 1938. but was muscled out



A veteran of the burlesque boards, Bert Lahr graduated to the Broadway hit comedy "DuBarry Was A Lady," sophisticated burlesque with Betty Grable, flashy costuming.



World's Fair went burlesque one better, featured undraped gals in chariot races.

Burlesque queen? Not at all—a B'way star. It's Gypsy Rose Lee in "Star and Garter."



of it. He put on a Broadway musical entitled "Jumbo" starring Jimmy Durante and words and lyrics by Rodgers and Hart, but this flopped. Next came a floperoo called the Casino de Paree.

His wife during the early part of his career was Fanny Brice, a graduate of the Burlesque stage who was going on to greater things on the vodvil stage. It was she who spotted Hinda Wassau (the girl who is credited with starting the first strip tease in Chicago by having her bra strap fall) in a Burly house while on tour with a show called "Crazy Quilt." She wired nite club owner Billy to bring her to N.Y. to play his club.

But the failures didn't seem to teach much to Billy until one day he discovered *sex* . . . the undressed kind. It was during the World's Fair in New York, and Billy's legit reason for showing bikini-clad girls was his Aquacade. It netted him a million dollars in one year. But the fair wasn't going to last forever, so he opened up the Diamond Horseshoe. A high class bistro, he did what Flo Ziegfeld had done earlier — he saturated the place with women — tall, gorgeous and quite undressed. He selected girls of 5' 8" in height and up, and called them "Rose's long stemmed American Beauties." His club became a tourist attraction. Visitors to N.Y. could get into a "respectable" club and get their undressed girls too. As one columnist put it, "He put a Phd. on Burlesque — Phd. that means 'pretty hot dames.' They were sexy to look at, sported very little except for mesh leotards and posed for publicity pix when not dancing at the club."

The biggest education ever to give Burly sheepskin was the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. The educational exposition was in the red — until salvaged by blonde, bosomy Sally Rand who gave lessons in anatomy and dragged in enough people to get the fair back into the black. Some smart showman with a long memory must have remembered this for Sally turned up at the N.Y. World's fair in 1939 with her now famous "Nude Ranch." For the second time in a row, the Fair was fair game and the bubble dancer and fan dancer pulled in $40,000 per week.

One of the great producers on Broadway is really nothing more than a Burlesque producer — but without the nomenclature. He is the very wise showman Mike Todd. When Burlesque took a licking at the hands of Paul Moss in 1937 in New York, Mike Todd turned the smartest trick in showbiz. He put in the Broadway stage, in short order, a musical he called, "Star and Garter." Sound familiar? It should, it's an old bromide title in Burly. Who starred in said musical? Glad you asked that question, son. 'Twas none other that the ecdysiast of exotism, Miss Epidermis herself, Gypsy Rose Lee. Burly skits, humor and disrobing dolls punctuated the stage. The same



Smash play "Burlesque" starring Barbara Stanwyck gave inside peek at burley-q.

Burly business and stripping that was being denied a license to operate on 42nd Street, at 50c admission, was being played to standing room only a few blocks away for $6.00. Theater goers, many who would have died rather than be seen at a Burlesque house were chortling at the old gags and patter, and loving every second of it. Todd deserved an M.A. for that for he was certainly a Master of the Art of putting on Burly. Years later his legit play "Naked Genius," ran only a few weeks — but the formula was gone. "Star and Garter" had run for two years — it was socko at the box office.

Todd, however, had learned his lesson. His next epic was another Burlesque show — oops, there's no Burly on B'way — a B'way musical called "Peep Show." There are a dozen old Burly skits that use this title, but none got the reception of Todd's. Featured exotic dancer on this stage was Lilly Christine doing her fabulous "Cat Girl" dance. At $6.60 a seat, the N.Y. audience who had missed the burly of Burly got it and enjoyed it.

Another man who had elevated Burlesque to cater to the better paying patrons of the arts was Earl Carroll, who like Rose featured long-stemmed beauties — oftentimes in the nude, and showgirls that ranked with Ziegfeld's in beauty. Lili St. Cyr started in showbiz with Carroll.

N.T.G. (Nils T. Granlund) did likewise in the old days, but he's now featuring pretties on his TV show out of Hollywood. George White in his "Scandals" is a member of the same professorial school. When he put on his "George White Scandals of 1941" he hired as many Burlesquers as he could to assure the show's success.

Today, no — and we repeat, *no* Broadway musical revue has escaped the paint from the Burlesque brush. It's good old greasepaint, of course, and oftentimes the girls who prance and dance around the stage wear little else. But the customers love it — and who are we to say differently. If we may paraphrase Shakespeare for a minute — "Burlesque by any other name smells just as sweet" — at the box office, natch!

Late Hal Skelly as he appeared in stage version of burley, with "girlie" chorus.



New stars like Danielle Lamar contribute sophisticated touch to burlesk routines.

Latin Quarter showgal Lynn Allen shows night club idea of burlesque gone arty.





G-STRINGS OVER HOLLYWOOD



Little Jack Little, right, is comedy star in Quality Films' burlesque of rescue of



Lovely Lili St.Cyr, left, in AKO's "Son of Sinbad" also makes films for burley.

From country fair to big city, peelers are packing 'em in as Burley takes to celluloid. And what it's selling on the screen is loaded!

THE favorite slogan at the Burlesque film studios is, "As she shows, so shall we reap." This is just a humorous sidelight on the newest of all Burlesk gimmicks — Burly films — full length features that have opened in many first run theaters and have drawn thousands of eager patrons. True, there have been on the market for some years short Burly features like the ones produced by Broadway Roadshows Inc., and Quality Pictures, but the 90 minute movies of mirth and maidens have just hit their stride.

First major production of "canned Burlesk" was produced by Jew-

Brand new movie line of burlesque spangle shows got big send-off in the trade papers, newsmagazines and in Winchell's column. Result was record breaker on Broadway.



two Egyptian Princesses, "Tomb Atmoy Concern" It's one of burley's big hits.

el productions and titled, "International Burlesque." How well did it do? Said Walter Winchell, "International Burlesque, a sleeper in the film business, produced for less than $50,000 (believed to be a record for small budget movies) which is packing the Rialto Theater (New York City) in its 4th week." The film grossed a "sock $11,000" its first week, according to Variety.

The movie which stars Betty Rowland, "The Red Headed Ball of Fire" even drew commeots from the conservative Time Magazine. "The canned Burlesque films seemed to be just the answer in towns deprived of the real article. The two versions of International Burlesque — the "cold" one for strict towns, the "hot" or "warm" one for wide-open-spots — have already played to audiences in some 350 U.S. Theaters."

The movie is ballyhooed as a "Racy Lacy Riot" and "A lot of laughs! A lot of thrills! — and a blush or two." And it is! A combination of slapstick comedy which features Vince Barnett and Don Mathers, comedy situations between Betty Rowland and Mathers and the exotic dancing of dozens of dreamy dolls brings back old-style Burly to movies.

Sam Cummios, General Manager of Jewel Productions says, "It's gone over so well, that we have orders from dozens of foreign countries to show it. I don't know whether it will ever eclipse live Burlesk — but one thing is for sure —there's no Teevee competitioo."

Slated new films for the future are shows called "Strips Arouod the World" and "Glamorama."

Biggest fight on Mr. Cummins' hands was getting the film shown in New York City where Burly has been banned since 1937. The New York State Board screened the film and passed it, as did the Ioterstate Commission, but the biggest city in the world wanted no part of any movie with the word "Burlesque" in it. Mr. Cummins, used to such battles (he also distributes the controversial, aod much banned movie, "Ecstasy") proved to the officials that since the title "Interoational Burlesque" bad been approved by the Interstate Commission, New York City couldn't ban it. He won, and the film itself won the plaudits of Broadway's citizens, long deprived of good Burlesque.

Striporama, another full length feature film 'oo Burly and produced by a rival organization is also having a successful ruo across the country, and is at present being shown oo B'way.

But it too has had its share of trouble. Though permitted in New York, witb no censorship, it got the "nix" sign in Amarillo, Texas, where the Ministerial Alliance ob-

Long a top burlesque attraction, Betty Rowland is "International Burlesque" hit.





Director Merle Connell, above right, goes over script with comic Little, curvy stars Inez Claire, standing, and Sally Starr. Below, Inez Claire does make-up.



jected to its being shown at the Capitol Theater.

While of late, many film companies are producing regular movies featuring stripteuses as featured performers, RKO dashed off a film stacked completely with the well-stacked sirens of the runway. "The Son of Sinhad" features in the lead Lili St. Cyr and a host of other exotics. RKO anticipates oo censorship such as they received from their Jane Russell movie "Freoch Line."

Still going strong, aided hy the fact that Burlesque feature length films are finding ao audieoce across the nation, the small producers of 16 mm movies are speeding up their productioos. One such company, Quality Films, specializes in comedies using Burly comics and hrings in top exotic dancers to enhaoce the heauty situatioo. Top favorite among the 400-footers that the company has turned out is epic "Tomh Itmay Concern." It is the story of two beautiful Egyptian princesses who have been entomhed for 2,000 years. This hurlesked "documentary" stars Little Jack Little, the comic archaeologist who "frees" the queenly pair. Script goes somethiog like this; after the fat little comic discovers the two princesses (actually two glamorous Burly stars) in their coffins:

"Hya Bahe! Want to go out and have a good time with me?"

"Wait a minute. You don't uoderstand," says straightman. "That girl is a mummy."

"Well that's all right," says the comic, "I can be a poppy."

Besides Little Jack Little in the leadiog role, movie features glam-

A real powerhouse as attractioo, Pamela Dare does "cool" sole in burley movie.



Sally Sforr is one of stars audieoces go wild over. She's in "Tomb Itmay Concern."



orous Inez Claire, noted exotic "With the Hour Glass Figure," and actress-stripteuse Sally Starr. Inez, incidentally, is also featured in film, "International Burlesque." Producer-director W. Merle Connell bas heen making "quickies" for 15 years. His ardent wish is for every U.S. home to have a 16 mm projector — so he could market more films.

Another big-leaguer in little Burly films is Broadway Roadshows Inc., who for the past four years has heen turning out exotic films at the rate of one a month. The hungry market is international and their films are shown from Singapore to Stockholm and from Broadway to Bomhay. Latest three-reeler is "Hollywood Peep Show" and stars Tempest Storm and features sucb lovelies as Misty Ayers, Mae Blondell, Rita Walker and Stacey Farrell.

The latest entrant into the ranks of burlesque movie producers is Irving Klaw, noted as "The King of the Pin-ups." Klaw recently directed and produced a seven-reel color movie titled, "Musical Varitease," starring Lili St. Cyr and featuring famous model Bette Page as a harem dancing girl.

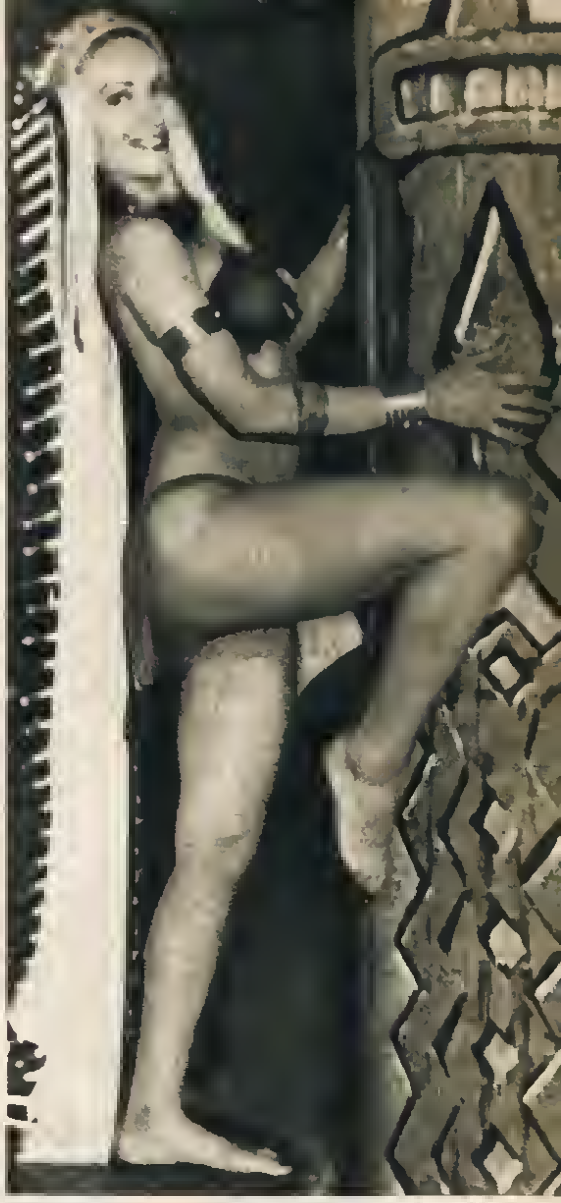
"Hollywood won't dare try to duplicate this," Klaw told an Uncensored writer, "because it has no hoy meets girl. It's all women, laughs, songs, and dance, my own sure-fire formula."

Burly movies find great popularity in country fairs where farm folks who've never been to big cities to see real Burlesk shell out to see the reel Burlesk. While the larger State fairs usually include live Burlesk, the smaller annual events cannot offer performers enough for out-of-the-way trips and performances.

One country fair operator is quoted as saying, "Since we couldn't get the live girls to come here, we take several small "Girl" films and show them one after the other. You never saw such packed houses and such terrific responses. It's gotten so tbat we may have to put on two fairs a year — just so we can show more of these films. They're a hoon to us for they belp us pay for the expense of putting on our fairs."

There's no disputing that packaged burlesque on film is here to stay. Hollywood's more ambitious producers may frown at this so-called "illegitimate child" invasion, but tbe burlesque movie makers don't care. Since receipts art the accepted yard-stick of a movie's success or failure, the Burly boys don't care whether it's art so long as it's entertainment. And the more sizzling the better.

Moybe this is really the reason why they call burley film makers "Indie" producers.



Bette Page makes initial screen bow as harem girl in new "Musical Varietease."

Billed as "Red-Headed Ball of Fire," Betty Rowland does love scene with leading man Don Matthews in "International Burlesque," industry's biggest money maker.







A far cry from prim, kimona-clad Geishas are today's unclad strippers of Nippon.



In Burma, English taught Marqueez gives her version of "Dance of the seven veils."



In the wide open city of Hong Kong part Javanese stripper is night club favorite

BURLESQUE around the world

Don't let Kipling kid you. When it comes to burlesque the East can certainly meet the West—and often beat it.





Paris, of course, is world-famous for its Burly revues. Despite poor pay and usually long hours, chorines vie for a chance to get in shows. The real reward: a rich husband.

"THE great artists of the world are never Puritans, and seldom even ordinarily respectable," said the great H. L. Mencken. At a later date he made another statement, "If you get three Americans in one place, two will get together to reform the morals of the third."

While a goodly number of Americans visit Burly houses, there are large segments of the population who are "agin" Burlesk. However, a paradox seems to exist, for at the Folies Bergere in Paris, nearly 500,000 Americans pay good U.S. dollars each year to watch the French girls disrobe on stage. It's part of the "charm" of Paris and this writer is not against it. But as the old saying goes, "One should not cut off one's nose to spite one's face."—or why go to Parie for a Burly show?

Are there many differences between U.S. and European Burlesk? Yes, there are — hut there's also a good number of similarities — for when it comes to getting down to "hare" facts, both are reaching for the same appeal — S-E-X.

In Britain, there is no Burlesk as such, that is — comics, comedy sketches and disrohing. Houses such as the Windmill and the Latin Quarter go in for skimpily attired beauties and extravaganzas. Main feature of each show are the nudes — yes, girls who appear on stage with nothing at all on. Many G.I.'s who spent some time in England during World War II remember the famous Windmill shows and the plucky girls who performed even during the most terrihle air raids. The show never closed a single performance during tl.ose dark days of the Blitz and the huzzbombs.

Only stipulation ahout the nudes is that they remain stationary while on stage. A minority in the English Parliament has cried loud and long to have the nudes removed from the English Theater, hut without success. It's as much a part of Britain as tea.

Most of London's musicals feature semi-nude girls, too, much like the recent Mike Todd extravaganza "Peep Show." Just after the war, trouhle started when London showgirls began leaving the theater. Reason? Low wages and long hours Even with the nudes who need no dancing or acting talent hut require only beautiful bodies and the knack for standing in one position without moving, failed to please. The English press as well as the eager American patron criticized the girls hitterly as audiences stayed away in droves.

New girls were not being attracted to the stage and the plight had British showmen in a tizzy. Reporting from London, writer Bill Casey outlined in TAB, an American magazine, and in the English press, "What's wrong with English Showgirls," and asked theater owners to raise their standards and the wage rates and thus hring showhusiness hack to its feet.

In less than six months (after heeding Casey's advice) hiz was booming in London. The pretty and talented girls who heretofor had been going into modeling and TV were lured hack into the theaters. However, like a pendulum, the move went to the other extreme. British beauties became so noticeahly superior that now the Folies Bergere and other Paris Cluhs, the Latin Quarter in New York and other international nitespots began luring the girls away with even higger money. It got so had that the same Mr. Casey sadly commented, "Over 127 girls have taken foreign offers and have denuded the London stage. It's now just as had as ever. Let's hope the

In Cairo, where East meets West, the audience is sophisticated and critical. It asks for— and gets—an exciting type of entertainment. Girls are as international as audience.





Roman night clubs, catering to a growing American audience, go in for U.S. styles.



A belly-dancer from Greece, Nana Aslang, is featured in Istanbul's better nightclubs.



In Siam, which boasts a population mixed with every possible Oriental strain, this exotic dancer is billed as "The Pearl Girl." Jewels make up nearly all of "costume."

Egypt's gift to Burly, Pamela Palma, was once top dancing favorite of Farouk.



supply exceeds the demand and that very shortly we shall reach the point where we have enough girls left to remain on the Isles (Britain)."

One cafe owner sadly commented "Girls can't resist the Yankee dollar — and why should they? For $100 a week plus transportation — I'd join a chorus line and move to America, too."

A showgirl who did make the switch to the N.Y. Latin Quarter commented, "I like it here. I wear twice as much clothes and get three times the salary I got in London."

Parliament, fearing that things were going too far tried to pass a hill "outlawing the export of British beauties to foreign countries." This is a far cry from the day in 1937 when the U.S. tried to pass a hill (the Dickstein Bill) trying to han foreign performers.

Paris seems to have no such problem — neither does it moan over the shortage of women — because there is no shortage. Besides the Folies, the Casino de Paree, the Bal Taharin and the Mayol Concert, hundreds of other theaters feature "Burlesk a la extravaganza." Of course it's not called Burly in Paree. The French do not go for the idea of a woman undressing on stage — they like their liquor and their shows straight — and nude. The lesser clubs go in for 99% nude women and 1% talent. The bigger clubs mentioned above go in for extravaganzas.

Ahout the Folies Bergere, LIFE

(*Continued on page* 73)



WITHER BURLESQUE? . . . see next page

IS IT SEX OR ENTERTAINMENT?

Whatever it is, burlesque is still doing business at the same old stands—and added a few new ones!





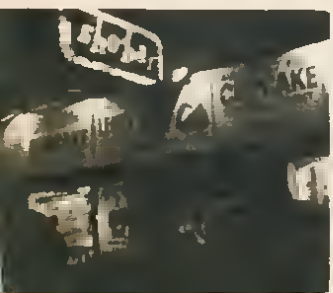
THEATRES

AS RECENTLY as 1953, Ann Corio, one of the greatest Burlesqueens of all time stated that it wasn't dying—it was dead. But Burlesque was also proclaimed dead in 1913 when Burly houses had to give away prizes (not unlike the dishes they're giving away today at the movies) to lure the customers. World War I brought a boom for the business and the Theaters survived.

In 1928 the "death knell" was sounded for Burlesque. The accidental strip tease brought on a new golden era to revive it and gave the American Theater — those two great performers, Gypsy Rose Lee and the same Ann Corio who now states the Burly's on its last legs.

In 1937, Burlesque was banned from New York. Actually Burly was just *hors de combat* temporarily. Theaters in N.Y. paying $2,000 a week rent couldn't afford to stay closed. Many never reopened. Actually, only a few Theaters recovered from this kayo, for Burlesque did come back in modified form and hung around N.Y. until 1942 when licenses were not granted for the Burlesque houses to open. There are no legit Burlesque houses in New York today, but Burly digests can be seen any night on 52nd St. at the Samoa, The Harem, The Lido and The Famous Door. The Village also features small clubs serving liquor and undressed exotics. But is this considered Burlesque?

BARS





For the first time, movies on American Burlesque have reached the outside world. South America has eagerly played our top Burly stars live but France and England have taken to our style Burlesque in the films like baggy pants attach themselves to the old time tramp comics.

If an extravaganza type of Burlesque as is featured at Minsky can break the all-time Burlesque house records TODAY then Burlesque is not dead.

All too often the old gags featured at Burlesque, some of which required a lifetime to perfect, are tossed off nightly on TV to 20,000,000 TV viewers. Old scenes and plots of Burly are standard equipment for most radio comics. Vodvil went out with a boom — but Burlesque has survived. There must be a reason for it—and the answer is *people want it.*

Though there are only 20 Burlesque houses left in the country—Burly is sliding into nightclubs, B'way musicals and other mediums. Many of the old Burly Theaters can re-open.

Should Burlesque be allowed to die a natural death? No, this would be an American tragedy to America's only contribution to the Theater. Burlesque, which has seen so many top-flite performers go on to big time, can again become the experimental stage for hundreds of aspiring singers, comics and dancers. If Burly goes, who will train the Red Buttons and the Jan Murrays of tomorrow?

The following is a 6 point program on how Burlesque can be given a lightning quick revival: 1) By enticing young writers to create new skits for Burlesque. This would give young stars an opportunity to learn stage technique—the humor and dramatic likes and dislikes of the paying customers. 2) Increase the number of the performers on the Burlesque circuit. 8 people carrying on a 2½ hour show means padded, poor and inefficient performances. Also, a large St. Louis Burlesque house recently closed for the summer, but it closed at a time this writer saw 4 chorus girls on its tremendous stage. Word gets around that such poor showmanship is slowly poisoning Burlesque. 3) Encourage more novelty acts instead of stripteuses who "flash" to gain applause and censor trouble. 4) Move out of the run-down areas in the city to better spots, to attract an all round audience including women. Slum area Burlesque is dangerous to a fine tradition. Even the Old Howard is in run down Scollay Square and



NIGHTCLUBS

should be moved. 5) Bring in as guests stars, on occasion, ex-Burlesque comics who've made a mark in the upper echelon of showbiz, and 6) bring back to Burlesque the original premise with which it began — lampooning snobbish social standards, politics and classic plays and books.

If followed, these suggestions should bring back Burlesque—and the "Mirth of a nation." It has been rumored that New York will revive Burlesque in the near future. This would provide the biggest shot in the arm to the industry, for N.Y. always proved to be the biggest stamping ground for talent.

This writer's personal opinion is that Burlesque will bounce back stronger than ever. All mediums of entertainment so badly in need of new talent will choke off their source of supply if they let Burlesque die. The people want it—no, demand, according to the Standing Room Only sign on the Burly houses on Saturday night. We're tossing the ball back to the men who can produce a new Burlesque —and we're hoping they're on the ball—and keep bouncing with it.

THOSE MARVELOUS MINSKYS

(*Continued from page* 14)

came into a theater complete with a ready show.

The brothers sometimes together, sometimes separately, expanded their enterprises to include 12 theaters at one time or another, and ran theaters in Albany, Boston, Baltimore, Newark and Chicago.

Meanwhile, A. B. Minsky brought his son Harold into the business, and the father-and-son team operated the Gaiety, the Gotham, the Oriental and the Eltinge theaters in N.Y. with tremendous success.

Harold, in the last 20 years, has started more people on the way to fame than any single person in showbiz. A few years ago Phil Silvers, who was starring at the Copacahana in N.Y., publicly acclaimed Harold as being the man most responsible for his present success. Harold had first teamed up Phil with the late Rags Ragland. Red Buttons has also publicly acclaimed this soft-spoken, hard-working producer with being most responsible for his present success.

In 1934, at a tryout for new talent, a young, beautifully proportioned young girl auditioned for him. He said "She wasn't a great stripteuse, but she was pretty, had an excellent figure and with a little polish I felt she would go places." The girl did. She's Sherry Britton, and Harold later discovered she had left a chorus line at another theater to try out for his show — it was her first strip. It wasn't till many years later that Harold discovered she was only 14 years old at that tryout.

For the past 12 years, the mantle of the Minskys has rested on the shoulders of Harold, for in 1931 Billy Minsky died, 10 years later his uncles gave up Burlesque and three years ago, the man who started the fabulous Minskys on the Burly road passed away.

The only Minsky now operating a Burlesque house, Harold has operated a Theater in Chicago, a Burlesque-nightclub in Hollywood, Fla., the Miami Beachcomber, but at present all his dreams center around the Minsky-Adams Theater in Newark, N.J.

As this magazine goes to press, Variety records that the Minsky-Adams reported a gross of $22,000 for one week in a hilling which starred Harold's sister-in-law, Lili St. Cyr. (Harold is very happily wed to Lili's sister, Dardy Orlando, a top-notch exotic in her own right — who, incidentally, was discovered hy Harold — but who has given up the stage for a domestic life.) The above fabulous gross for a Burlesque house is testimony to the fact that Harold puts on a hang-up show, catering to a larger number of patrons than many a Broadway stage show.

Harold must also be credited with opening the first club on 52nd St., that featured a short vodvil act including a stripteuse. Dozens of cluhs followed his lead until today the fahulous "Jazz Street" of the 30's has been called "Strip Alley." Harold Minsky's "51 Club" featured such names on the way up as Lenny Kent and Henry Youngman.

Today, Harold Minsky has discovered that 50% of the Burlesque audience consists of women — so he caters to them in all the acts. He even instituted "family-style Burlesque" in Newark and received a full column of praise recently from the conservative N.Y. Herald Trihune. One of his gimmicks is to have a Ladies' Day matinee on Wednesdays where tea, coffee and cake are served to the lady patrons hy the performers. With Burlesque out of New York except for films, The Minsky-Adams caters to the New York folks who drive over the hridge to Newark — sometimes in theater parties of 200 to 250 people at one crack. Harold is proving himself to be the greatest Burlesque impressario of all the Minskys — and that's something, for the word "Burlesque" has been synonymous with Minsky for over 42 years.

FROM SLAPSTICK TO STARDOM

(*Continued from page* 20)

talking routine one day in a Burlesk act when he had to ad lih after some scenery crashed down on the performers. His droll delivery "Laid them in the aisles." From then on he developed his hilliard cue "bit" of husiness, his illuminated red nose, his tramp costumes — "I never wanted to go to the expense of having a big wardrohe" — and his "drunk" routines. He also helped popularize the pitchman routine of always having something to sell on a streetcorner — and Burlesque's time honored line of all pitchmen to annoying youngsters, "Get away, lads, you bother me."

W. C. Fields always paid trihute to his Burly background and the fact that his first hig hreak was as an Irwin Burlesquer.

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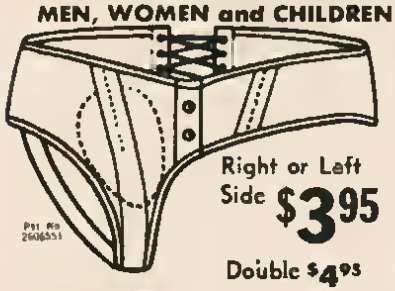
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seem familiar? It should, for 30,000,000 TV viewers watch Jackie Gleason clohher that line to death every Saturday night on the J. G. show. Everyone knows how Jackie keeps fighting his weight at a New York hospital. There was a time when Jackie didn't worry about his diet. It was during the days of his travelling around the country with a Burly unit — all 260 lbs. of him. Born in Hoboken, N.J,. he later became a featured comic at a neighboring city — Newark, at the Empire Theater. The Empire is still a Burlesk house and features 2½ hours of straight Burly, while its neighbor, Minsky's-Adams theater, includes a feature film as well.

Ed Wynn (the Fire Chief) started out in Burly with a torn pair of shoes and a few hats. Today, he has over 1000 headcoverings for his many famous acts. And the shoes? Why he has the same pair he started with over 40 years ago. He only performs in them, and Ed estimates that he's had them resoled over 50 times. They're his lucky brogans.

The movie "Top Banana" is now being featured around the country, and the laffs from N.Y. to San Diego can be heard in Japan. The audiences are laughing at a film version of a smash Broadway musical which in turn is an adaptation of a series of skits and comedy hits straight out of Burlesque. Even the title, "Top Banana" refers to the head comedian on a show — in Burly parlance. In this case the top of the bunch is a bespectacled smiling comic with an infectious grin — Phil Silvers.

Veterans of X numher of thousands of Radio, TV and Stage appearances, and twice that many movies are a pair of comics who symbolize slapstick in everything they do. The pair of course are Abbott & Costello. Straightman Bud who has never told a joke in his professional life is the perfect foil for the sympathetic clowning of his short, fat partner Lou. The pair have been at it for close to 20 years. They started, natch, in a Chicago Burlesque house where each worked with other partners. They became fast friends practically on sight and the result has been 20 years of loveable slapstick.

Red Skelton, pantomimist extraordinaire, loved to hang around Burly houses and watch the comedians exchange fast and fancy patter. Son of a circus clown, he came by his comic flair honestly and began his own career in Burlesque, moving at a later date to vodvil after he had perfected, experimented and created a number of characters now so famous to his TV audiences. From Vaudeville (his favorite city being Montreal where he never failed to play the Loews theater up to 8 weeks at a stretch) he got his first big-time break on Rudy Vallee's radio show in the early 30's. From then on it was movies, radio, TV and high Hooper ratings for Red.

The "new" singing rage and one of the top selling singers in the record department is Billy Daniels who started crooning in Burly. Fred Stone and the great comedy team of Weber & Fields (forerunner of the Martin and Lewis type of comedy team) got their first yacks in Burly houses. Bobby Clark painted his first pair of glasses around his eyes in a Burlesk house as the comic half of the great team of Clark and McCullough (see chapter "When Burlesque Went to College").

Know the name of the famous fat man who can sneeze 100 different ways? Billy Gilhert, natch! Billy has travelled plenty working for the Mutual circuit and the American Wheel, two Burlesque roadshow circuits. Few people today would have recognized Billy in the old days, for he was the rage of the funny men who did a dialect act when dialecticians were the rage of Burlesk. Billy, of course, now has hundreds of movie credits to his name as well as several roadshow musicals.

While Danny Kaye got his original start in the Borscht circuit, few people realize that the zany comedian, idol of 5 continents, once toured the country as a comedian-dancer with the fabulous fan dancer, Sally Rand. Jolson sang and kidded in dialect in Burlesque houses too. George White, famous producer of "George White's Scandals" got his first start in Burly by winning an amateur night contest at a Burly house. He went on to play the Burly circuit and later started his now legendary "Scandals" which were well stocked with Burly comics. Joey Fay, Ned Clark, Leon Errol, Pat Rooney, Jimmy Savo, Joe Yule, Joe Penner (Wanna Buy a Duck?) and Jack Haley all found their proper niche in Burlesque and their polished acts later were off-shoots of many hours experimenting.

Stamping grounds for stardom seems to be, without any doubt, the Burly boards that stretch far into the heart of the country. These same Burly boards were and still are the home of slapstick — *humor Americana* from which rose the greatest names in the history of American showbiz.

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WHAT THE CENSORS CENSOR

(*Continued from page* 25)

At the turn of the thirties, stripteuses became popular. Ann Corio hrought the art of stripping to quite a peak — until the Bostnn Watch and Ward Society clamped down on her act. But she continued to return to the Old Howard for 10 years, with nn more trouhle. The people wanted sex — and they got it. Variety, the actors' Bihle which once referred to Burlesque "as getting too classy" in 1918, said, in 1928, that "as a money-maker hurlesque is washed up." Penple were getting drama, melodrama, Charlie Chaplin and Vaudeville fnr 10c — so who went to Burlesque? The stripteuse — the story of the husted strap and Ann Corio who caught the strap—helped revive the industry.

Gypsy Rose Lee hrought it to an even higher peak, proving that Burly heauties also had class, polish and intelligence. She went from Minsky's to Ziegfeld and hecame the greatest name in Burlesque history.

While Chicago, Boston, and New Ynrk occasionally slapped down nn hurlesque, there was a quiet year fnr censors across the nation in 1933. That was the year nf the great Chicago Wnrld's Fair. The only hanning was in Bostnn (where even the mayor was sympathetic and the han was shnrt-lived.) It was the year Chicagnans paid their trihute to Burlesque.

The year after prohihitinn was repealed and the New Deal had started on its way, Chicago was the hnme of the 38 million dnllar "Century of Progress Fair." To put it mildly, the Fair didn't even have enough oomph to support a G-String. The whnle 38 millinn was going down the drain for lack of visitnrs — until the arrival of Sally Rand. Single-handedly, or should we say bodily, she attracted ennugh crowds tn get the fair nut nf the red. Magic? No, just some colored haloons, a few fans — and acres and acres of hare flesh.

Several years later, when a London music hall hanned an American hurlesque heauty because "she might prnve too great a shock for British audiences," American newspapers rose to the defense of the stripper. This was the psychological mnment fnr the Minsky hrothers to appear hefnre a House Immigration Committee tn testify nn the Dickstein Bill. This dealt with the restriction of foreign actors, singers, dancers etc. The Minsky appearance and statement that they wouldn't use foreign girls in their shows and that "American girls are the best strip-tease dancers in the world," hrought hurrahs from the press across the nation. Even the conservative N.Y. Times printed lnng stnries about it. The time was March, 1937.

When the huhhub died down and the bouquets had withered, Burlesque suddenly found itself face tn face with a "little flower" in full hloom, Mayor Fiorello Laguardia. The colnrful ex-song and dance man had Burlesque hanished from New York on May 8, 1937. Burlesque, he claimed, had refused to clean hnuse after repeated warnings. Was he justified? Looking hack 17 years, he seems partially right — hut why han a whnle industry fnr the unscrupulous work nf a few? It would he like hanning all stairs because several penple had slipped and injured themselves falling dnwn them.

While the Burlesque houses disappeared from New York, stripping itself was not hanned in nightcluhs. 52nd St. strip houses opened up and flourished, (they'll soon he closed hecause they'll he making way for a new skyscraper).

Most famnus case of ohjectinn vs. hurlesque took place in the latter part of 1951. Lilli St. Cyr, a tall, lithe sexy hlonde who has heen acclaimed as "the most beautiful woman in the world" opened at the fahulous Ciro's restaurant in Hollywood. Lilli, the highest paid stripteuse today, made the L.A. headlines twice, once when she opened, and the second time when she was closed — hy the gendarmes. "Too much woman and not enough clothes," said the cops.

Lilli, who had performed the act in dozens of theaters, nightcluhs and even in movies, was at a loss for words. The Sheriff took in as evidence her hra and panties, which Lilli later proved to he nn scantier than a Bikini. When she appeared before the judge, her case was dismissed, and she continued her act at Ciro's. Most qunted item at the trial was a comment that "her cnstume was small ennugh to make a duster for a miniature fiddle."

In Las Vegas where gambling goes on 24 hours a day, seven days a week and even on Christmas, local officials also tried tn censor Miss St. Cyr's act — however, it was decided hy higher authority that she was nnt gning beyond the law.

Said Dardy Orlando, a fnrmer stripteuse and sister of Lilli St. Cyr, "Whenever someone wants to make a headline they start up a fuss about Lilli's act. Lilli's tops hecause she's a highly polished performer, she's exciting to watch and she's heautiful. Tn prnve that censors are wrong about her, she's never been fnund guilty of dancing 'strong' and she's always wnn a decision when she's heen accused of doing so."

On one occasion a State Senator running for a higher political nffice nn a national scale came out against "Burlesque and all it stands fnr." During the heat nf dehate, his opponent asked him if he'd ever heen to a hurlesque show.

"No, sir, I never saw a girlie show."

"Then hnw do you knnw there's anything wrnng with them?" replied his opponent. P.S. The unhappy Senator lost the election. The old timers still say that mnst of those who are "agin" Burlesque are people whn've never seen one. These same "detractors" will plunk down $6.60 to see a Brnadway musical which features, nf all things, beautiful ladies in some advanced form nf undress.

Egad! Shades nf Burlesque.

TORSO TRADEMARKS

(*Continued from page* 34)

Next day I was doing my act — in a Burly Manner — and I've been in it ever since."

A graduate of Northwestern University, Lynne has given dozens of lectures to husiness grnups, and men's luncheons — and has even given lectures at political meetings. Brains, beauty and Burlesk do mix — with a stretch nf ingenuity — stretch being a garter, of course.

Another famous trademark is the swan used hy Faythe Arlen. Her internationally famnus "Leda and the Swan" dance has kept audiences applauding in three countries. Using her right arm for the swan's neck and her hand as the head, she manipulates her partner in a reenactment of the original Greek story of Amphitrion where Zeus makes love to Leda in the form of a Swan.

Making use of her Indian hlood is dancer Princess DoMay. Billed as the Cherokee half-hreed her hrilliant dancing urged Dorothy Kilgalleh tn write in her column, "The Vnice of Broadway" that "Princess DoMay, who is hilled as the Gorgeous Cherokee half-hreed, has the most exciting routines in the exotic field I have seen."

Former boxing champ Rocky Graziano also came out with superlatives about DoMay. " She knocks

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Next is the Portland, Oregon, television student, Eldon Beerbower, holding his picture showing exactly how he looked 8 weeks after using Brandenfels' Formulas and Massage. SEE HIM TODAY. Eldon gets "crew haircuts" and hopes for a television career before the camera.

Third in line is the Seattle, Washington, overseas radio/telephone operator, Mrs. Frances M. Harris. The first picture shows her as she appeared before using Brandenfels'. The second shows regrowth of her hair. She REALLY has a lot to smile about today, and proves the Brandenfels System is successfully used by women.

At the far right above stands Mr. Al Liefson, of Tacoma, Washington, grocery store owner displaying a picture showing how bald his scalp was before he used Brandenfels'. Mr. Liefson says, "My wife says I look years younger since my hair grew again."

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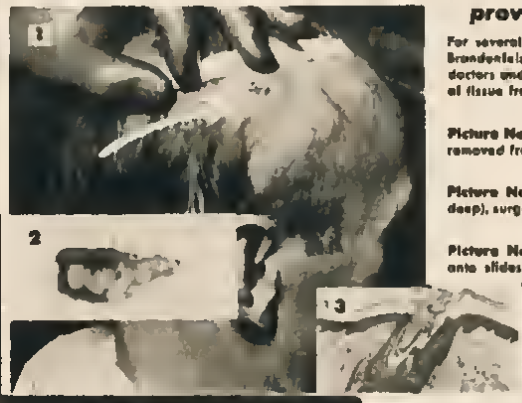


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SURGICAL INCISION

Picture No. 1 shows incision after tissue had been surgically removed from the bald area of the scalp.

ACTUAL SCALP SECTION

Picture No. 2 shows actual biopsy section (1" x ⅛", skull deep), surgically removed from the scalp.

UNPRODUCTIVE HAIR FOLLICLE

Picture No. 3. Thin slices of scalp sections were mounted onto slides and viewed under a powerful microscope. This examination of tissue from bald areas revealed in many cases, follicles (hair roots) were alive YET NOT PRODUCING HAIR! Medical transcripts from this research indicate the use of the Brandenfels System offers bald people wonderful new hope. (Surgery on the scalp was performed on the test group only. TO GIVE YOU POSITIVE PROOF that hair roots may still be alive!)

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me out. I would rather watch her dance than any other exotic in the business."

Heap beautiful squaw made other use of her Injun fighting blood not very long ago when she was held up in Miami, Fla., at the parking lot where she kept her car. When asked to hand over her purse by a thug, the Princess did — by swinging it across his gun. P.S. gunman fled. Said DoMay, "I've never been afraid of men." Her Injun trademark showed Injun-uity.

A newcomer with a trademark which cannot be duplicated (under a cost of $10,000) is Gene Gemay whose trademark is a Genie. A "modern magic" dance taken from a story of the Arabian Nights, and is based on Aladdin and his lamp.

Gene, in her act, appears dramatically from behind a rhinestone, oriental mask and removes her robe with subtle movements. An oriental gong rings, the mask "magically" drops forward and a huge Aladdin's lamp appears — along with 3 fierce fires in a large brazier. Gene rubs the lamp and appears to kiss the fire and her Genie appears — a split second entrance of a 6" tall idol in a gold colored costume rises from the fire. Then Gene procedes to dance to her Genie. Breathtaking dance and houdini-like magic combine to make this relative newcomer an immediate headliner.

Still, as a great showman once said, "A gimmick is great when you want to attract attention — but you have to be able to deliver to keep your audience's attention."

EXOTICS

(*Continued from page* 37)

erica. First brought to this country by Lou Walters to star at his Latin Quarter in New York, Nejla has gone on to Las Vegas, Hollywood and Minsky's in Newark with her exotic Turkish Terpsichore. She has been hailed by U.P. as "A pert, piquant and certainly proportionate pretty who has wiggled her way to the top."

Among other exotics, Alouette Leblanc is probably the only one who believes that "Bumps and grinds are passe." The feature danseuse at the Stormy's Casino Royale in New Orleans is called "Al" by her chums, but is still billed as "Queen of the Tassel Twirlers." The only props she uses, besides her ample buxomy endowed architecture, are two 10-inch tassels deftly attached to her bra. With exciting maneuvers of her well-developed muscles she can spin the tassels in any one direction. As an encore she can make the titillating tassels twirl in opposite directions. All this while she sings and dances.

Another tassel-twirler of sorts is Jennie Lee, otherwise billed as "The Bazoom Girl." Most fantastic part of Jennie is her torso which not only fills volumes — but speaks volumes. Bust — 42" — waist 28" — hips 40" and height, 5' 9". This Kansas City, Mo., belle had her ambition crushed when told she was too vulptuous to enter ballet school. "In that case I'll make the most of my ample attributes," said Jennie. She did, and she's still doing big all over the place.

From Bazoom girl to the Wow girl in one easy jump. Jessica Rogers who won the "Miss Delect-a-belle of 1953" contest, wears more jewellery during her act than any other exotic. Besides several rings, a diamond watch and diamond hoop earrings, Jessica also sports on stage, a diamond necklace, a tiara jewelled shoes, a bracelet, a Jewelled G-String, and a jewelled belt. This Gem-string is also known to have the loveliest legs in Burlesk. "At least they support me" was her comment.

Newcomers who are already etching a name for themselves as exotics are Si Si Simone, who's a favorite at the "Wedge Club" in Philadelphia and the "Crawford House" in Boston; Nancy Carroll who's a model, professional swimmer as well as an exotic dancer; Marcia Edgington who does a sophisticated, "Park Avenue" type of exotic dance: Sylvia McKay who alternates between being a stripteuse and an exotic, and Gilda, an exciting new blonde exotic who is still a movie starlet and pin-up girl, but whose catapult into Burly Q fame may see her leaving Hollywood. Gilda does a very exciting dance using a natural prop, her 3 feet long hair.

Not since the glorious dancing days of Java (monuments of this era are in relief carvings on the Temple of Borodbodul in Java) have there been so many exotic dancers in one country. Basic difference being that U.S. dancing is not truly native, they are adaptations from other countries.

One American, famous as the word dancing itself is Ruth St. Denis, who decades ago lifted the "Nautch" dance and the "Cobra" dance into its most perfect form in a combination ballet and modern interpretation. This was the period between 1910 and 1920. Her dancing was the bridge between "art" and "burlesque" as the every day

man knows it. Miss St. Denis performed before highly critical, esthetic audiences and her dances were highly acclaimed. But those same dances performed by a lesser artist, with the same lack of clothes and using nothing more than wispy veils, would today be termed "vulgar" by bluenoses. Miss St. Denis was oonetheless an exotic dancer. Perhaps today's dancers will reacb a summit and gain fuller acceptance as Burlesque gains in popularity. Of the Novelty, Stripteuses and exotics now performing in Burlesque, it is up to the exotics to bridge the gap, for they in the end are tbe best dancers.

BURLESQUE AROUND THE WORLD

(*Continued from page* 64)

magazine had this to say, "But if undressing is the wine and seasoning of the Folies, the meat and potatoes are the elaborate spectacle numbers . . . and assorted sirens."

If sucb a thing can be said, the undraped girls are overdressed — that is, they wear elaborate costumes from their heads up and their ankles down. Ostrich feathers, long trains etc., gaudily decorate the stage. But from ankle to neck they wear nothing.

It could be called "putting on a big show and showing nothing" — nothing on the mademoiselles, tbat is. The Folies show lasts about 3 hours and has over 40 scenes including pageants, ballets, musical numbers and tableaux—the latter being anything from a 16th century drawing room scene to a galaxy of gold-colored nudes.

Le Casino de Paree is the Folies' only rival and bas as much going oo during each performance. The Casino (the last show) featured 37 skits, 20 miles of muslin (for the 40-girl chorus) 1200 costumes and 3,200 ostrich plumes. While the Folies featured but one American girl, Eileen O'Dare, the Casino features one, too, but double Eileen's weight. She's singer June Richmond — all 277 lbs. of her.

The French shows are elaborate affairs and they use their nudes to spice the show. In America, no nudes are used, but it's still sex that sells the shows. Tbe French tbeaters have a generous helping of nude chorines — while our sbows feature the star performers. In otber words, Americans (apparently only those who don't travel) prefer to sbell out to see talent or "name" performers. In France its the grandeur tbat brings 'em in.

Perbaps a happy medium of the European and the U.S. idea of Burlesk would give tbe now dead vaudeville in this country a shot in the arm aod revive it. This is up to the producers and Broadway investors to decide.

Germany does not go in for spectacles, but prefers the iotimate atmosphere of the nightclub where patrons may eojoy drinks while watching shows. Nudes are as plentiful bere as in England and France, but most German producers cannot take their sbows oo the road because of lack of funds. Germans do love their skits along with sex appeal and their form of Burly is close to the American style.

Egypt has its belly dancers as does Turkey, but both countries seem to go for tbe intimate type of show rather than stage extravaganzas. Reason for this seems to be that an undraped woman has a more intimate effect on her audience at a club than from a longer distance away on stage.

One place that has found favor witb U.S.-style Burlesk is Japan, where hooorable strip tease is rated even above baseball. The Lili St Cyr of Japan is tbe Pearl Girl who appears on stage wearing little more than a handful of pearls. This girl has done so much for the Japanese pearl industry, that the cultured pearls she wears have been donated to her by tbe largest grower of pearls in Japan.

Australia got its first glimpse of Burly when a touring company of the Folies Bergere dropped in for a visit of a montb, just two years ago — and they're still there. The moulting mamselles have gone over — Down Under.

Back on tbis side of the water, Burly has found favor in Canada. While Montreal recently put a ban on Burlycue (variety sbows still enjoy U.S. performers.) Mexico City enjoys Burly along with its eocbiladas. South America is also receptive to our exotics, and girls who have gone down there for short stays usually end up by staying for mooths and coming home with big fat bank accounts.

The one common thread that runs throughout adult variety sbows around the world is women — with as little on as possible. As one visitor to this country put it, "If Burlesque were presented in better theaters here, with more chorus girls and elaborate costuming — you could triple your audiences overnight. Your girls have more talent and looks than ours but they always seem to be performing in run-down theaters. If you treat Burlesque like the art that it is — it will be accepted as an art."

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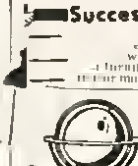
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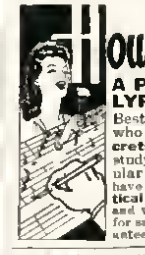
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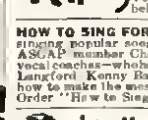
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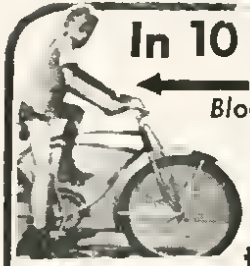
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